

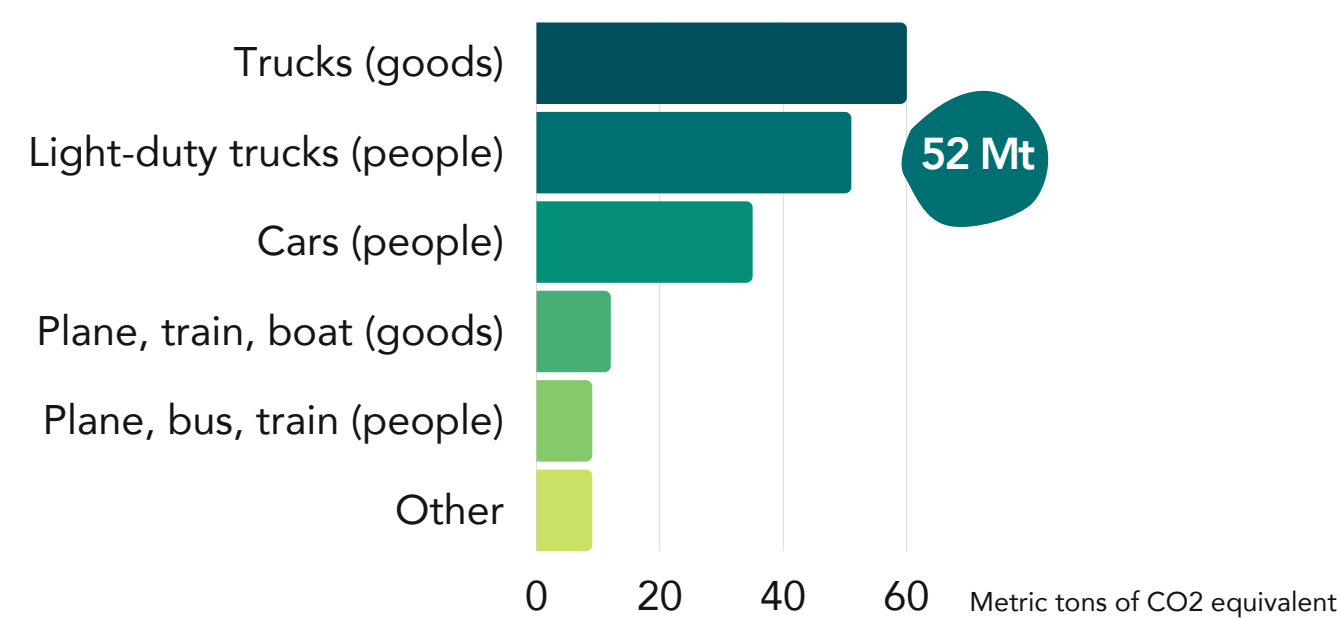
A STRONG LINK BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND LARGE VEHICLES SALES SHOWN IN A NEW STUDY BY ÉQUITERRE

While Canada is not on track to meet either its greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets or its zero-emission vehicle sales targets, the number of light trucks on the road (SUVs, pickup trucks and vans) is skyrocketing. A new report from Équiterre highlights the power and influence of automotive advertising in Canada, including advertising for large fuel-inefficient vehicles, which represented 79,9% of new personal vehicle sales in 2020. This proportion has been growing steadily for nearly a decade.

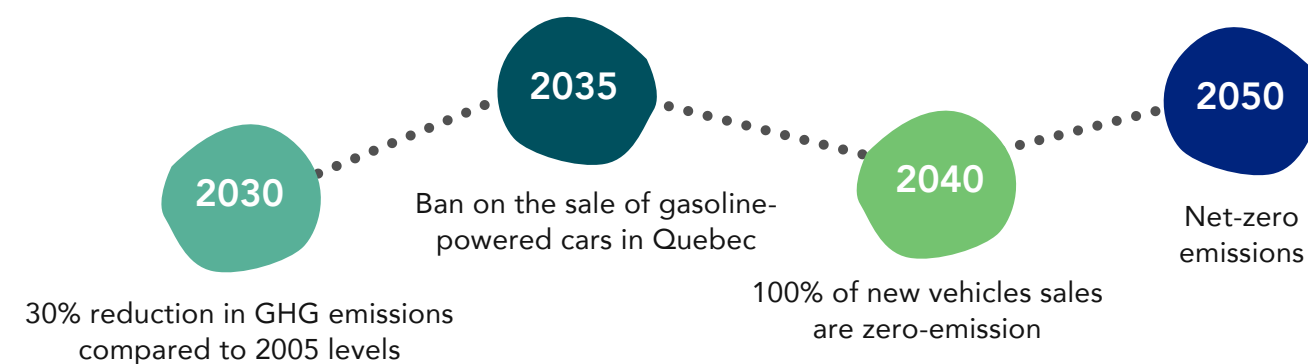
CANADIAN CONTEXT

Canada is one of the largest per capita GHG emitters in the world, and emissions from its transportation sector are on the rise. Responsible for a quarter of the country's emissions, it is a key sector in the collective effort to meet the country's climate targets.

GHG EMISSIONS FROM THE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR



CLIMATE TARGETS



REALITY ON THE ROADS

- Light-duty trucks rose by 280% in the vehicle fleet between 1990 and 2018.
- They produce an average of 31% more GHGs per kilometre than standard automobiles.
- They exert greater pressure on road infrastructure and exacerbate traffic congestion issues.
- They increase the danger in collisions with other vehicles: accidents involving pickup trucks and SUVs are 158% and 28% more likely to result in the death of the driver of another vehicle than accidents involving smaller cars.
- Because of their height, SUVs are nearly twice as likely to injure a pedestrian's hip or legs than smaller cars, and cause more serious injuries in a collision.
- On average, SUVs are much more expensive than smaller cars, adding to the overall Canadian household debt. They can cost up to 40% more to purchase and 15% more to fuel.

AUTOMOTIVE ADVERTISING

PART OF THE PROBLEM

Key findings on the automotive industry's advertising practices:

- Domination of the environment is often displayed by depicting off-road vehicles in natural settings;
- Vans are barely seen in ads, indicating that SUVs have replaced them on the market;
- Highly attractive financing terms are very often featured.

None of the ads mention the vehicle's fuel consumption and/or CO2 emissions, and less than half of them display its retail price.

DISPROPORTIONATE INVESTMENTS

79% In newspapers and magazines, light-duty trucks are represented in abundance compared to smaller cars: they appear in 79% of car ads.

The automotive sector was the largest investor in digital advertising; in 2018, its share stood at 21%. **\$1.6 billion in 2018**

PERMISSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORK THE INCREASE IN LIGHT-DUTY TRUCKS HAS ESCAPED CANADA'S ADVERTISING FRAMEWORK

Canada
Canada has no federal legislation in place to regulate automobile advertising before it is released.

Belgium
Advertising must not mislead the public regarding the product's effect on the environment. There are restrictions on the use of locations that are not part of the public road system.

United Kingdom
Automobile advertising must include statistics relating to the vehicle's fuel consumption rate and CO2 emissions.

New Zealand
Automobile advertising must not encourage or depict environmental damage in areas of significant conservation value (riverbeds, wetlands, peat bogs, lakeshores or estuaries).

Sweden
Terms such as "environmentally friendly" can be used only if, throughout its entire life cycle, the product does not harm the environment or if it improves it.

ÉQUITERRE'S SOLUTIONS

In order for Canada to move effectively to carbon neutrality by 2050, it is imperative that governments take an active role in aligning the regulatory framework for automobile-industry advertising with the country's climate goals, as well as in shifting consumer transportation choices.

Équiterre's key recommendations to the federal government:

- 1 ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE INCREASE IN LIGHT-DUTY TRUCKS IS A PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUE.**
- 2 ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT, MULTI-SECTORAL PANEL OF EXPERTS TO ADVISE AND ACCOMPANY GOVERNMENTS.**
- 3 DRAW ON EXISTING ADVERTISING RESTRICTIONS (TOBACCO, SPEEDING, ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN) AS A MODEL.**
- 4 GRADUALLY INCREASE THE REGULATION OF AUTOMOTIVE ADVERTISING AND SPENDING.**
 - CREATE A CANADIAN AUTOMOTIVE CODE OF ADVERTISING** Requirement to display CO2 emissions or fuel consumption as well as the full retail price, and restrictions when depicting nature.
 - ESTABLISH A MECHANISM TO VALIDATE THE CONTENT OF AUTOMOTIVE ADVERTISING PRIOR TO RELEASE.**
- 5 UNDERTAKE CAMPAIGNS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY.**

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