

Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction

Janna Hoppe

j.hoppe@newclimate.org

Jan-Luka Scheewel

jl.scheewel@newclimate.org

Proofreading

Hyunju (Laeticia) Ock

Design

Polina Korneeva

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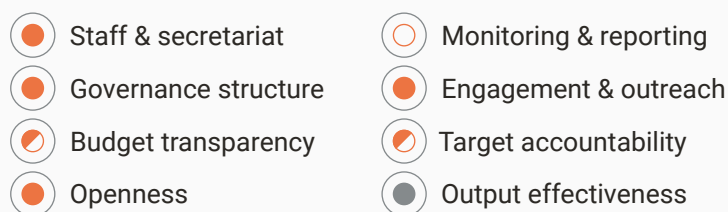
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Disclaimer

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Commitment: The Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) envisions a zero-emission, efficient and resilient buildings and construction sector. Members work towards several near- and long-term targets: **by 2030, the built environment should halve its emissions, 100% of new buildings must be net-zero carbon in operation, and embodied carbon must be reduced by at least 40%.** By 2050, all new and existing assets must be net zero across the whole life cycle.

Institutional robustness



Legend: ● High ● Medium ○ Low ● No data

Key moments

2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026

Launch at COP21 in Paris 79 initial members	Release of roadmaps and first global status report	First Steering Committee elections	Publication of regional roadmaps		Launch of the Buildings Break-through	Launch of the Intergovernmental Council for Buildings and Climate	Over 400 members, including 74 national governments
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Signatories



74 national governments; 24 subnational governments; 18 national and subnational government networks; 17 intergovernmental organisations; 74 civil society organisations and NGOs; 60 research institutes and think tanks; 140 private sector organisations

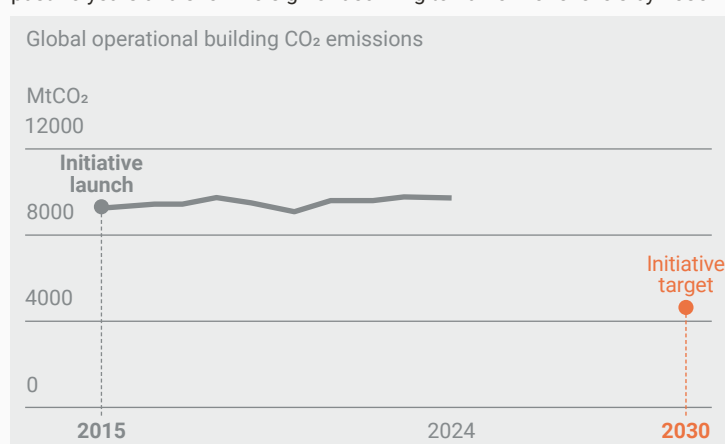
Study

Abatement potential

Roelfsema et al. (2026)	Impact of Breakthrough Buildings initiative (near-zero emission buildings are the new standard by 2030) on buildings-sector emissions: A reduction of 0.0 GtCO₂e/yr below current policies for signatories and of 0.01 GtCO₂e/yr for global implementation in 2030.
UNEP (2024)	To meet the 1.5°C target, the buildings sector needs to account for 11% of the global mitigation potential in 2035, equivalent to 4.2 GtCO₂e/yr of avoided emissions in 2035.
IEA (2022)	IEA NZE Scenario: Direct buildings-sector emissions need to fall from 3 GtCO₂/yr in 2020 to below 2 GtCO₂/yr in 2030; both direct and indirect emissions to fall from 9 GtCO₂/yr in 2020 to just over 4 GtCO₂/yr in 2030.

Global progress

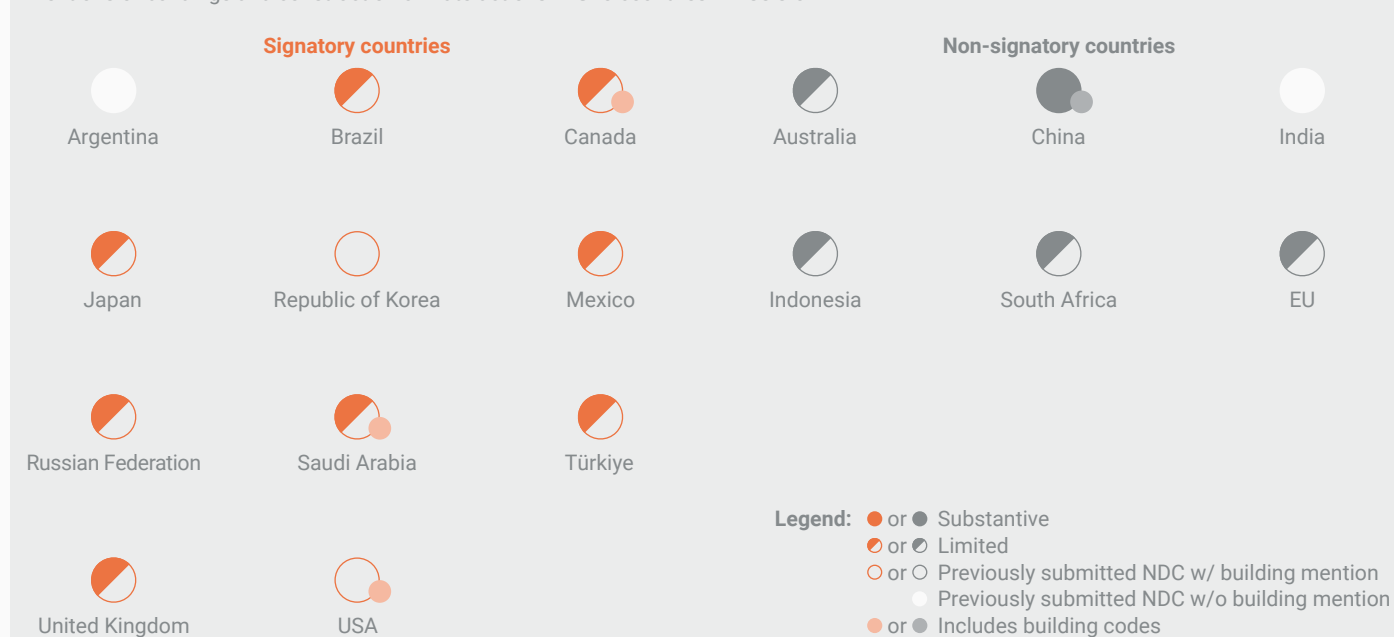
Takeaway: Global buildings sector emissions have remained flat over the past 10 years and show no sign of declining to half of 2015 levels by 2030.



Ambition

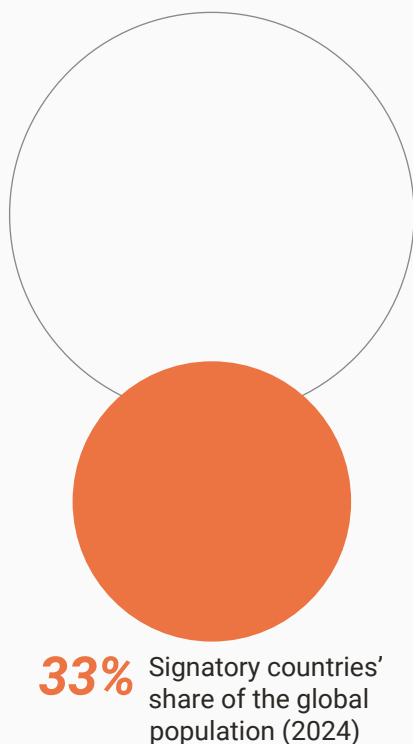
Takeaway: Many countries only list a limited number of measures and strategies for reducing emissions from the buildings sector in their NDCs. Similarly, many have not yet adopted building codes.

Mentions of buildings and construction climate actions in G20 countries' NDCs 3.0



Significance

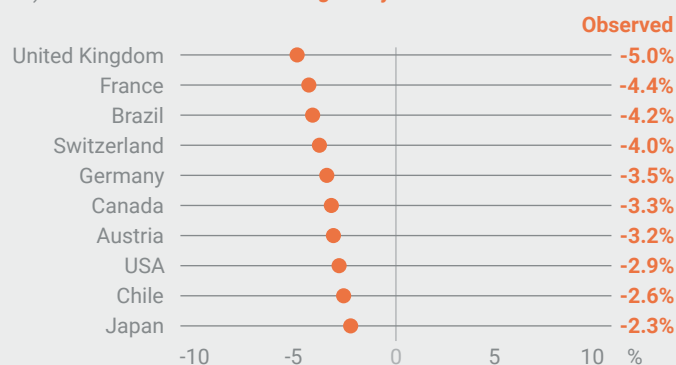
Takeaway: Buildings are responsible for 37% of total energy-related CO₂ emissions, including direct and indirect emissions from their operation and construction. This makes the sector an important yet often overlooked sector for mitigation action. However, signatory countries only account for 33% of the global population.



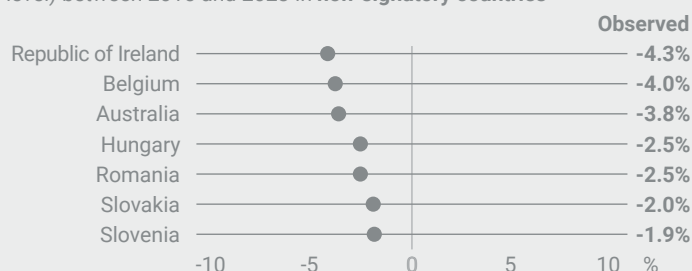
Country-specific progress since initiative launch

Takeaway: Signatories do not perform better than non-signatories when it comes to reducing carbon intensity. A systematic comparison is challenged by varying domestic conditions and data limitations.

Average annual change in carbon intensity (tCO₂/dwelling, % of 2015 level) between 2015 and 2023 in **signatory countries**



Average annual change in carbon intensity (tCO₂/dwelling, % of 2015 level) between 2015 and 2023 in **non-signatory countries**



Case study: Japan

Japan was one of the founding members of the GlobalABC initiative and has since joined other building-sector-related initiatives, such as the Global Cooling Pledge, the Buildings Breakthrough and the Déclaration de Chaillot. While Japan is engaged internationally, its progress in reducing emissions has fallen short of its potential. Despite notable reductions in energy intensity (-27% between 2000 and 2023), the buildings sector still accounts for over 30% of total energy-related CO₂ emissions.

In 2025, building codes were updated to mandate more stringent energy conservation standards for homes and small buildings. The government further plans to achieve Zero Energy Buildings (ZEB) standards for all newly constructed buildings by 2030. It is also currently considering introducing a life-cycle approach to reduce embodied carbon emissions and is investing in green building materials. In this process, Japan states that it is following the example of Northern European countries, with few references made to international initiatives.

Related initiatives: [Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance \(CNCA\)](#); [Cool Coalition / Global Cooling Pledge](#); [Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment](#); [Buildings Breakthrough](#); [Déclaration de Chaillot](#)

Related GST effort area: (Paragraph 28a) Tripling renewable energy capacity globally and doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030; (Paragraph 28d) Transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science

Key takeaways

- 01** The GlobalABC is a long-standing initiative that has evolved into a coordinating platform for more recent efforts, such as the Buildings Breakthrough. While it has attracted 74 government signatories, these collectively represent only around 33% of the global population.
- 02** Global progress is not on track. Emissions from the buildings sector have remained flat over the past 10 years and show no sign of being halved by 2030.
- 03** The abatement potential of the initiative and buildings-sector measures varies significantly depending on the scope of emissions considered – whether limited to direct emissions or extended to include indirect and embodied carbon emissions. Effective mitigation strategies also differ widely across countries due to variations in climate, income levels and construction practices.
- 04** Despite its importance, the buildings sector is often overlooked in climate policy, as evidenced by fewer and less detailed measures included in countries' NDCs compared to other sectors. Only two countries (Canada, United States) have zero-emission aligned building codes, and both are voluntary at the sub-national level.

Case study: France

France is not only a member of most buildings-sector initiatives, but also one of the initiators of the Buildings Breakthrough, the Déclaration de Chaillot and the GlobalABC initiative.

As an EU member state, France is implementing the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), which requires all new buildings to be zero emission by 2030. This replaces the previous nearly zero-energy standard and includes a ban on on-site fossil fuel use from 2030. The country's RE2020 regulation targets the life cycle of buildings and includes emissions caps for new buildings that gradually become more stringent. France has also set a positive example by being one of the first countries to link government support for renovations and low-carbon technologies to household income.

Emissions from commercial and residential buildings have fallen 40% below 1990 levels – a development that has been attributed to policies. However, the sector will not reach net-zero emissions by 2050 based on current policies alone.

Sources:

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Ikaga et al. (2025): [Japan's efforts to reduce whole-life carbon emissions from buildings.](#)

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