The Climate Policy Landscape in Ontario

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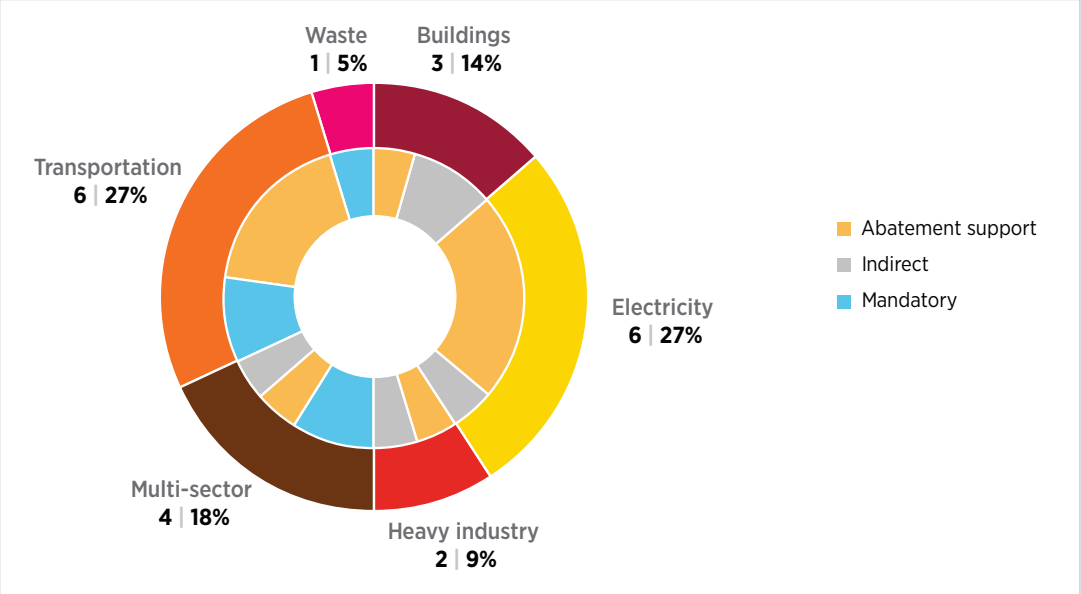
Of the 359 total emissions-reduction policies in the **Canadian Climate Policy Inventory**, Ontario has 22 active policies (six per cent) and one inactive policy. The Government of Canada has the largest number (74 active policies).

Figure 1 shows the active policy instruments employed by the Government of Ontario, categorizing them by sector. The inner ring highlights the share of instrument types — abatement support, indirect or mandatory — by sector, while the outer ring indicates the number and percentage of total policies targeting each sector.

Policies are classified by instrument type based on how they reduce emissions: mandatory, abatement support, and indirect. Mandatory policies impose a compulsory requirement on regulated parties (e.g., regulation). Abatement support policies incentivize voluntary adoption or development of lower emissions processes or products (e.g., consumer subsidies). Indirect policies do not require or directly incentivize abatement but nevertheless contribute to emissions abatement (e.g., enabling legislation and information). Mandatory policies are generally considered to be more effective in reducing emissions than opt-in abatement support or indirect policies. Active policies are those currently requiring compliance or providing support, including policies that are proposed or announced. This category also includes abatement support policies (e.g., consumer subsidies) that are fully subscribed but still have ongoing projects. Inactive policies are those that have concluded as scheduled, or have been suspended or cancelled.

Figure 1: Policy Instruments Employed by the Government of Ontario by Sector



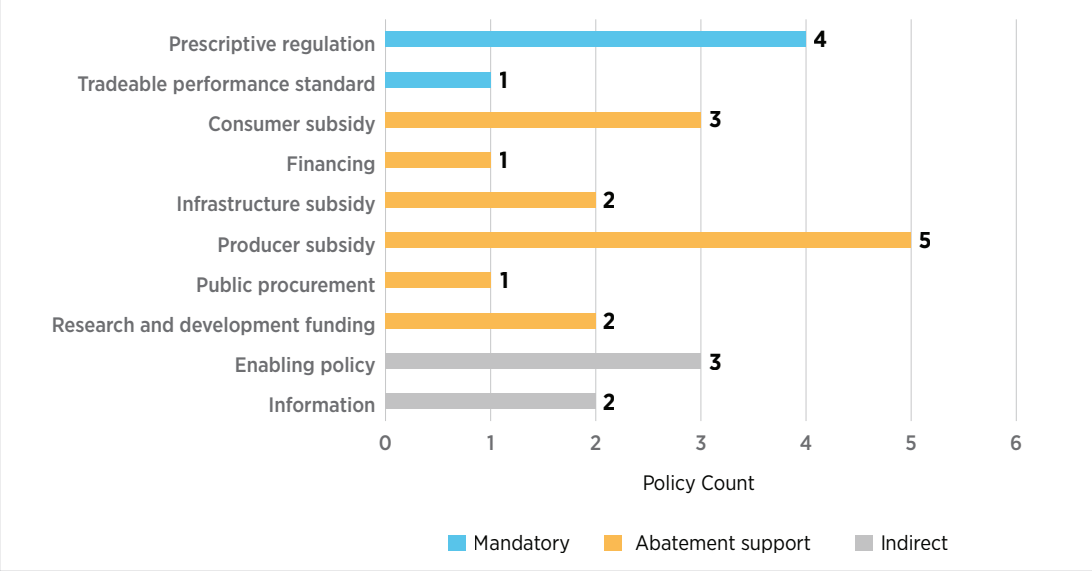
Source: Canadian Climate Policy Inventory, Version 6.
Note: This figure does not include inactive (cancelled, concluded, or suspended) policies.

KEY FACTS

- In Ontario, carrots (abatement support) dominate instrument type when compared with sticks (mandatory action). Carrots: e.g., subsidies for electric vehicle production. Sticks: e.g., the *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Performance Standards*.
- There are 22 implemented policies.
- Since publication of the first version of the C2P2 database in **August 2024**, one policy has concluded, and one policy has been added.
- There are 68 active federal policies that apply in Ontario (10 mandatory, 54 abatement support, and four indirect policies).
- Most policies reduce emissions through improving energy efficiency.
- Policies targeting the electricity and transportation sectors account for most emissions-reduction policies (e.g., DriveON vehicle emission testing program).
- Ontario has a mix of broadly applied policies covering multiple sectors (e.g., *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Performance Standards*) and narrowly scoped policies that are technology or project specific (e.g., funding to build public electric vehicle charging stations).
- Notably, Ontario does not have any policies targeting the agriculture or oil and gas sectors individually.

Figure 2 displays the number of policies by the policy instrument applied to mitigate emissions.

Figure 2: Number of Policies by Instrument



Source: Canadian Climate Policy Inventory, Version 6.
Note: Abatement support policies can be implemented using a combination of instruments, making the total number of instruments greater than the total number of the Government of Ontario's policies. This figure does not include inactive (cancelled, concluded, or suspended) policies.

ABOUT C2P2

The Canadian Climate Policy Partnership (C2P2), led by **Dr. Jennifer Winter**, provides publicly accessible information on Canadian climate policies, supporting effective strategies to adapt and mitigate climate change, improving resilience, and helping Canada meet its net-zero emissions target.

Partners and funders include the Alberta Real Estate Foundation, the Canadian Climate Institute, CIRANO (Centre Interuniversitaire de Recherche en Analyse des Organisations), the Government of British Columbia, the Government of Canada's Environmental Damages Fund, Mitacs, Quebec Net Positive, Royal Roads University, the Smart Prosperity Institute, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Office of the Vice-President (Research) at the University of Calgary, and the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary.