

E360 DIGEST
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United Kingdom CO2 Emissions Fall to Lowest Level in Nearly a Century

A record drop in coal use – coupled with the rapid growth of renewable energy, an expansion of energy efficiency programs, and an increase in burning natural gas for electricity – have driven carbon dioxide emissions in the UK to their lowest levels since the 1920s, according to a [new study](#) by the non-profit group, Carbon Brief.

The study said that CO2 emissions in the UK fell 5.8 percent from 2015 to 2016, driven by a 50 percent drop in emissions from coal burning. In the past decade, coal use in the UK has fallen by 74 percent, a major reason why UK carbon emissions are now 36 percent below emissions levels in 1990, according to Carbon Brief.

The UK’s carbon emissions were 381 million metric tons in 2016, the lowest level since the 1920s. UK coal usage has been plummeting because of increased use of natural gas, carbon taxes on coal, expansion of renewables, falling energy demand, and the late-2015 closure of the Redcar steel works. Three coal-fired power plants closed in the UK in 2016, the Carbon Brief report said. The huge drop in coal emissions in 2016 was partially offset by a 12.5 percent increase in natural gas usage and a 1.5 percent increase in oil consumption as lower gasoline prices led to UK residents driving more miles.



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