

Worldwide Overproduction of Cars

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INTRODUCTION

CrudeOilPeak¹, a website that tracks global oil production and consumption as well as its impact on the economy, states that over the past decade, global car production has surged by 52%, predominantly driven by China's growth. In contrast, oil supplies have only increased by 16%². This disparity highlights a significant challenge: the demand for cars is outpacing the available oil supply. To further illustrate this issue, they have created a visualization that compares the growth in car production by country/region against the growth in global liquid supplies (Figure 1). We found the visualization to be severely lacking and messy, and believe that it can be improved to be more visually appealing and easier to digest.

PREVIOUS VISUALIZATION

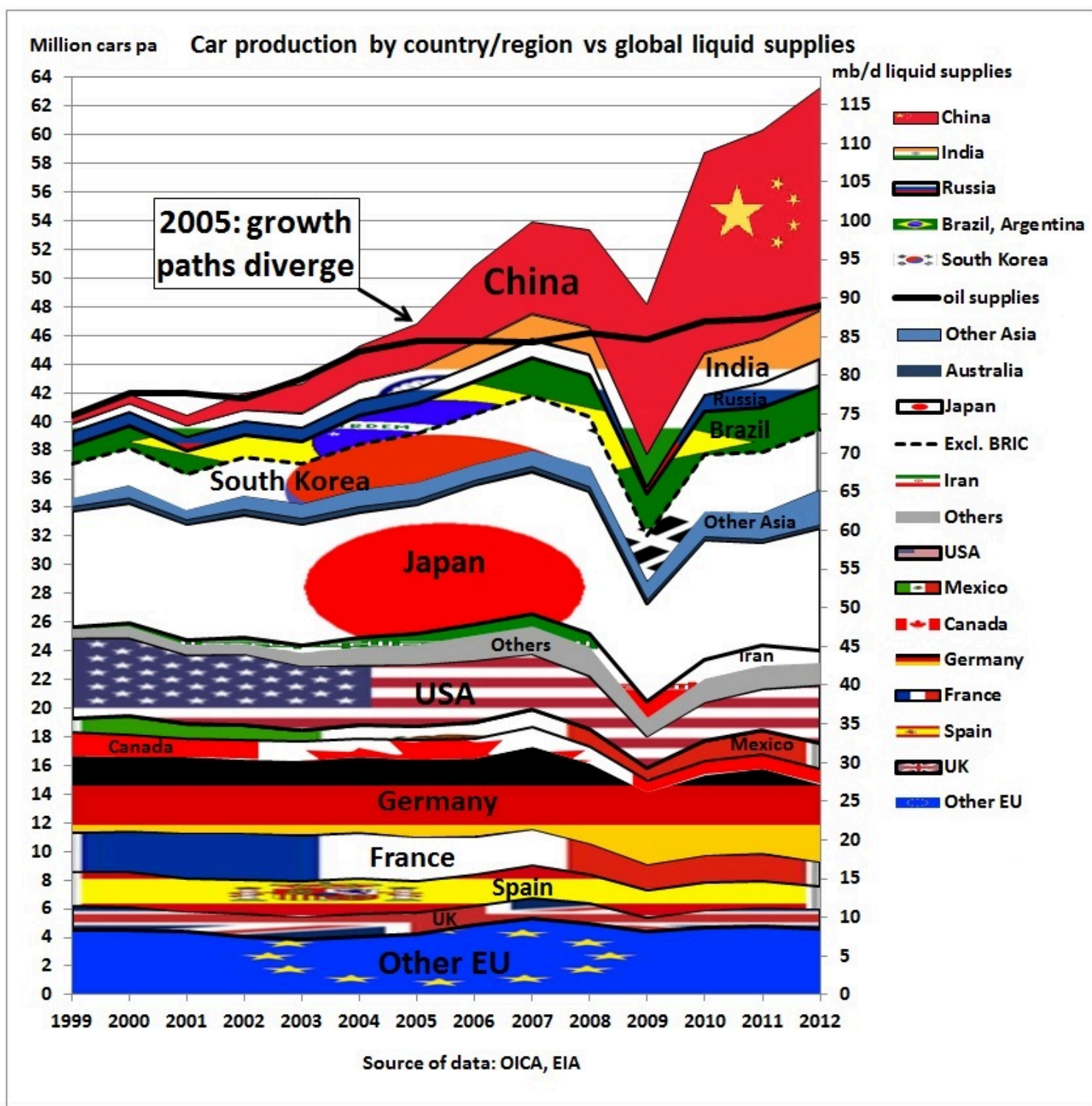


Figure 1: Car production by country/region vs global liquid supplies

STRENGTHS

- Article Title:** The article title is impactful and states the main point of the visualization.
- Annotation:** The annotation provides context and explains the significance of the black line.
- Divergence:** The data clearly shows the point where car and oil production diverge.

¹<https://crudeoilpeak.info>

²<https://crudeoilpeak.info/world-car-production-grows-3-times-faster-than-global-oil-supplies>

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

- Reduce visual clutter:** Stick to a consistent color scheme and remove unnecessary elements.
- Remove flags:** Flags add significant visual clutter due to the sheer number of countries.
- Emphasize divergence:** Use more contrasting colors to highlight divergence. The current graph uses black on black.
- Aggregate data:** The data illustrated are too fine-grained. A significant number of countries in the graph do not increase the amount of information gained due to their negligible magnitude.
- Color Scheme:** Choose a better color scheme to fit the user's natural bias (e.g., Red for BRIC, Blue for non-BRIC countries).
- Multiple y-axis:** The graph currently has two y-axis, which can be confusing for the average reader to understand.

To make the graph more intuitive, we propose simplifying it to highlight key points. The article focuses on three main points:

- Divergence** between car production and oil production starting from 2005.
- Sharp increase** in car production in BRIC countries after 2005.
- Comparison between **BRIC** and **non-BRIC** countries.

IMPLEMENTATION

Data

- Car production data by country/region were obtained from the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA) for the year 2023³.
- Similarly, the oil production data were obtained from the U.S. Energy Information Administration⁴. However, the data was not bundled together initially, so we had to manually combine and summarize the data from the different sources.

Software

We used the Quarto publication framework and the R programming language, along with the following third-party packages:

- readxl* for data import
- tidyverse* for data transformation, including *ggplot2* for visualization based on the grammar of graphics
- knitr* for dynamic document generation

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR INTERACTIVITY

Because our visualization was intended for a poster, we did not implement any interactive features, including the infotip. However, if the data is visualized in a HTML document, interactive features can be achieved using R packages such as *plotly*. In that case, we recommend implementing a tooltip that shows the actual label values on a mouse over event, offering additional info, if necessary, for the user.

³<https://www.oica.net/category/production-statistics/>

⁴<https://www.eia.gov/international/data/world#/?>

IMPROVED VISUALIZATION

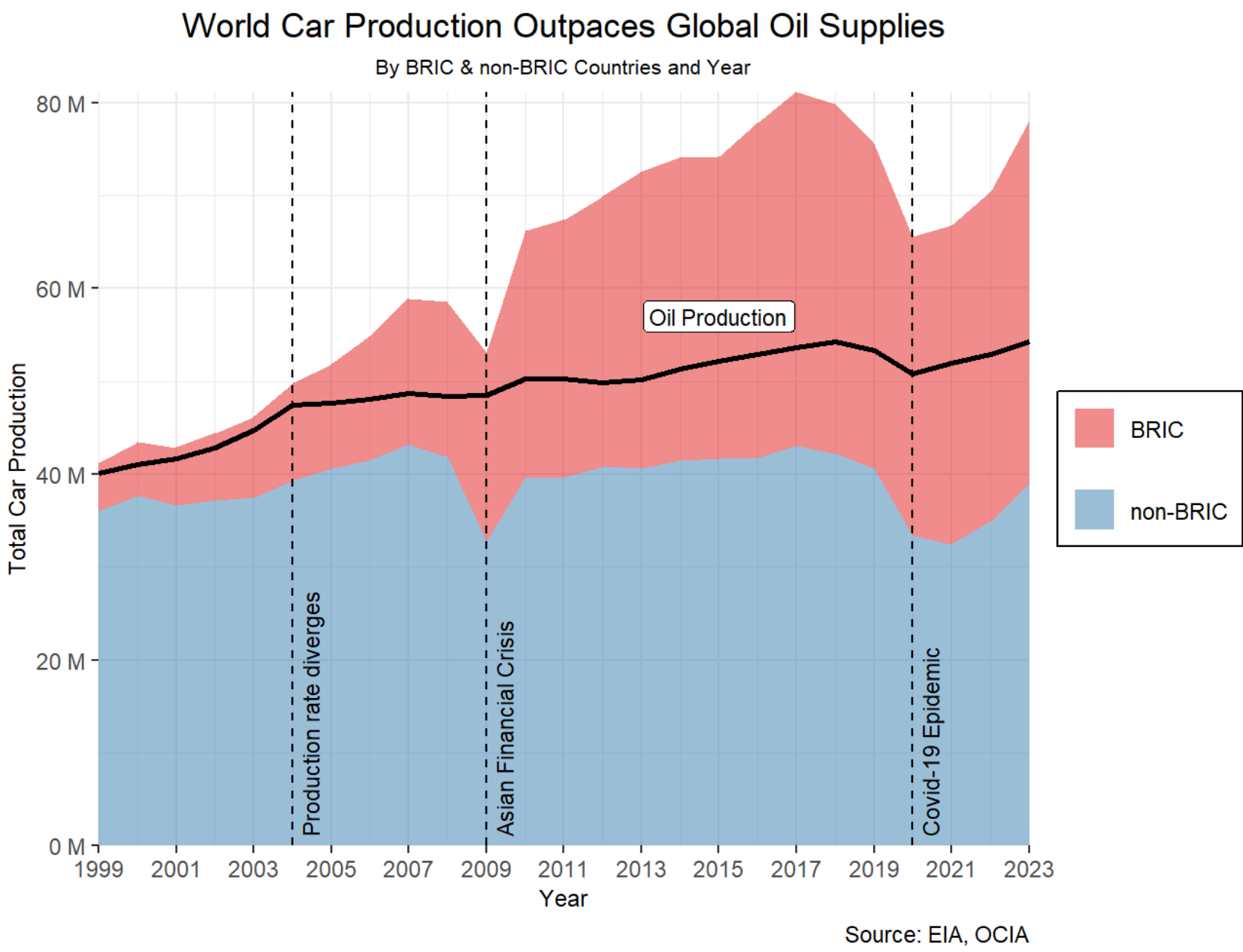


Figure 2: Revised visualization of world car production outpaces global oil supplies

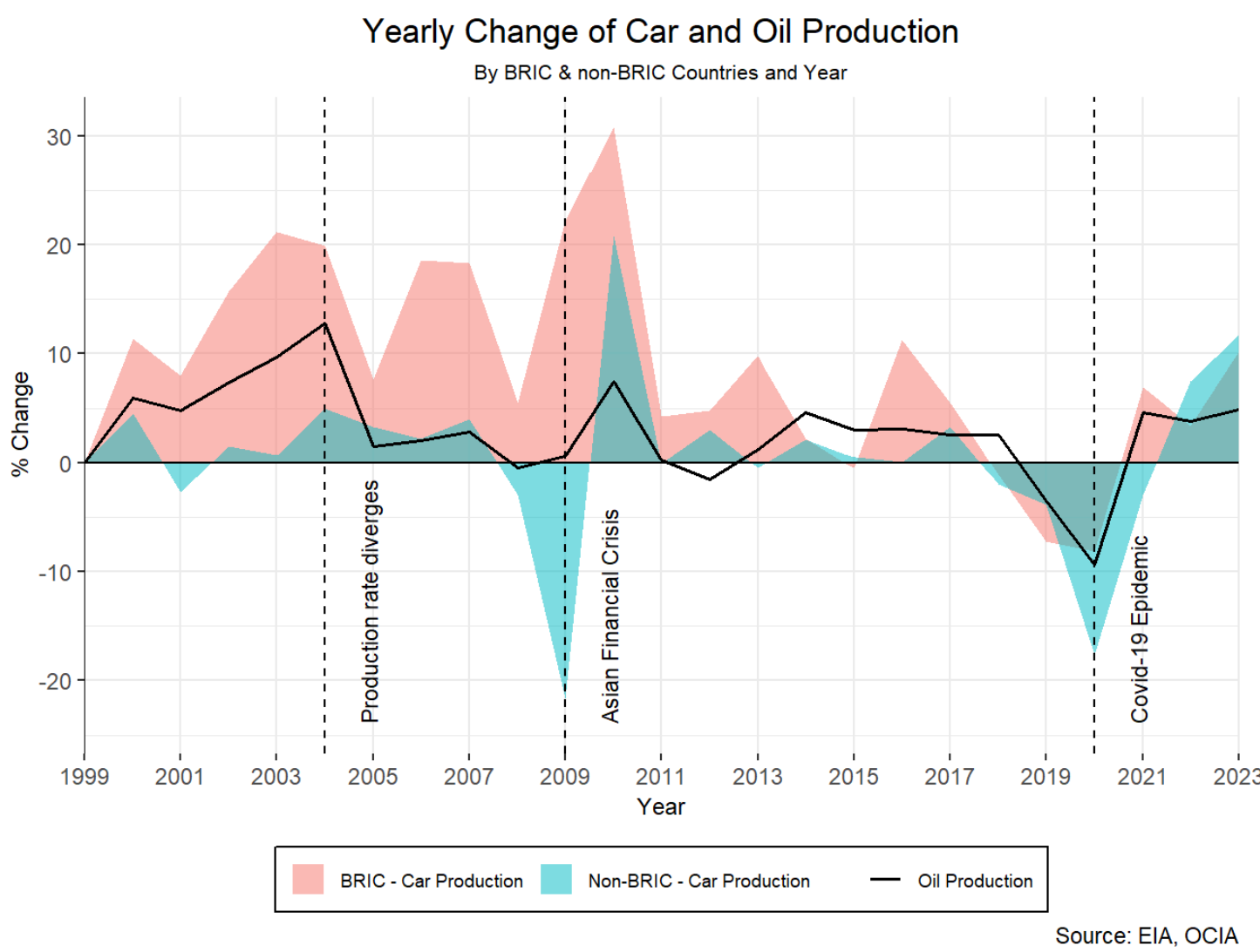


Figure 3: Revised visualization of yearly change of car and oil production

CONCLUSION

We successfully implemented all suggested improvements for the non-interactive visualization. Users can clearly see the divergence in production between oil and cars. The second graph fully supports this idea intuitively, as the percentage change in car production is always higher than the change in oil production (i.e., the line drawn is always above).