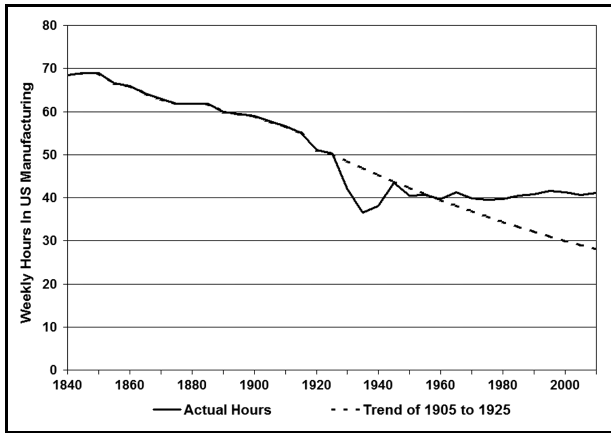
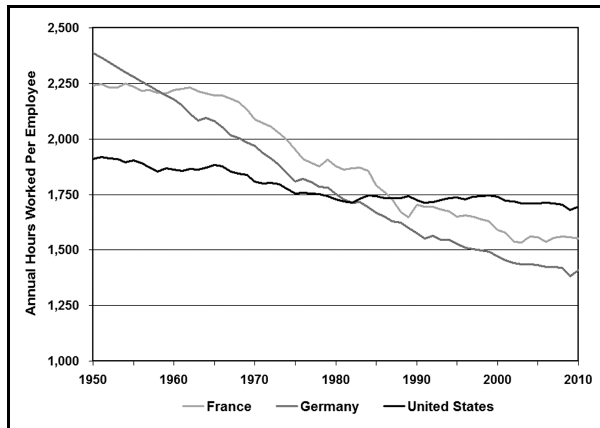


American work hours declined from the early industrial revolution until the Depression but have not declined since 1945.



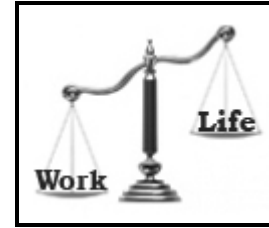
Average Work Week in US Manufacturing
Source: Historical Statistics of the United States

In Europe, work hours are still declining.



Yearly Work Hours in France, Germany and the United States
Source: Groningen University Total Economy Database

If American work hours had kept declining at their historic rate, our ecological footprint would be about 25% smaller.



**Cleaner Environment
Stronger Families
More Jobs**

Yes on Q

**Flexible Work Time Initiative
On the Berkeley ballot November 2014**

“A valuable initiative. Academic research shows that shorter work time cuts carbon.”

— Bill McKibben, founder of 350.org

www.flexibleworktime.com

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What This Initiative Does

In 2013, San Francisco and Vermont passed laws that give employees the right to request shorter work time and other forms of flexibility (such as telecommuting or compressed work schedules). In June 2014, President Obama issued an executive order that adopts this same policy for federal employees.

This sort of “right-to-request” law has been successful for over a decade in the United Kingdom, where employers grant the overwhelming majority of requests. More forceful laws have been successful in the Netherlands and Germany.

This advisory initiative, on the November 2014 ballot, calls on the city of Berkeley to:

- ◆ **Pass a “right-to-request” law**, which allows employees to request shorter hours and other forms of flexibility, requires employers to respond to the request in writing, and lets employers refuse the request if they give a business reason for refusing. There is no appeal if the employer refuses, and small businesses are exempt. The city should get the public input needed to fine-tune the law so it works for businesses and employees.
- ◆ **Write letters** to the federal and state governments asking them to pass this sort of right-to-request law.

**Please endorse
this initiative!**

Email info@flexibleworktime.com with:

- Your name, as you want it to appear as an endorser
- (optional) Institutional affiliation for identification purposes only

The Benefits

With a law that lets us choose more flexible work hours, we could have:

- ◆ **Stronger Families:** Our standard 40-hour week dates back to 1938, when families were expected to have stay-at-home mothers. Today, most American families with children have no stay-at-home care-giver, and 90% of those families say they have trouble balancing work and family obligations. Today's working parents need more flexibility than father needed 75 years ago.
- ◆ **Cleaner Environment:** If people choose to work less and consume less, they will pollute less (all else being equal). Reducing work hours by 10% reduces ecological footprint by more than 10%, according to the study “Work Time and the Ecological Footprint of Nations,” because people with shorter work hours consume less and also consume in less ecologically destructive ways, such as cooking for themselves rather than buying fast food.
- ◆ **More Jobs:** People in well-paid jobs would be more likely to work shorter hours, so employers would need more people to do this work. In the Netherlands, they say that Increased part-time work was the main cause of what they call the “Dutch employment miracle” of the 1990s, when unemployment fell from 13% in the mid-1980s to 6.7% in 1996.
- ◆ **More Satisfying Lives:** People would choose to work shorter hours only if they thought it would improve their lives. This is most important for caregivers, but it can also improve the quality of life of people who want to semi-retire or who just want more time for their own interests.

Because of global warming and other ecological threats, many of us feel that we should consume less in order to protect the world's environment. Yet most people do not even have the option of downshifting economically by working shorter hours—choosing to have more free time instead of more stuff.

In our over-worked economy, parents and other caregivers are the ones who have the greatest need for more free time. Having time to spend with your children is an important family value.