

## Maximum working hours in The Courageous State

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I have already [offered one quote](#) from my 2011 book [The Courageous State](#) today. Let me offer another now as it seem to be topical:

### **Maximum working hours**

Work is important. Fair pay is important. But so too is life beyond work. The simple fact is that when people work less they also consume less, their carbon footprint is smaller, but their quality of life is usually higher. Of course, for some working too long is about avoiding poverty and that is why measures to improve benefits and to reduce tax on the poorest are essential and that is why an increase in the minimum wage is also vital. For others, though, working too long is about excess hours to consume more goods that they really do not need.

In both cases the impact is extraordinarily harmful. Family life, relationships, interaction with the wider community, any participation in society, and an opportunity to realise a person's meaning are all foregone to the sacrifice of time to work for cash.

Few countries, bar the French, have really addressed this issue properly, which is why the French example of setting a maximum number of hours that a person may work is so refreshing. A Courageous State has to say that work is vital, but you can always have too much of a good thing and that working for too long is harmful: a cap on working hours is essential.