

Social security for visual artists

Amendment of the Swedish public inquiry on social security and welfare,
SOU 2015:21

The Swedish Artists' Organisation, Craftsmen and Designers' Organisation,
Association of Swedish Illustrators and Graphic Designers, and
the Association of Swedish Professional Photographers.

Mats Söderlund

Poet and Writer

Twitter @Matsthepoet

Summary

- ◇ It is notoriously difficult to adapt an artistic occupation to a general social security system. The same difficulties apply in all countries.
- ◇ The 2015 inquiry suggests that actual income before your sickleave, shall determine the size of your compensation. All your separate employments, regardless of duration, shall count.
- ◇ The 2015 inquiry does not take into account that about 80-90 percent of the visual artists run a small proprietorship, and will therefore not benefit from this improvement.

Social and economic reality of visual artists

- ◆ Visual artists work an average of 47 hours per week (134 percent of full time)
- ◆ Visual artists have a taxed median income of 15 000 EUR per year.
- ◆ The more time you put into your artistic work, the lower your income.
- ◆ Less than 10 percent of the visual artists make more than 3 200 EUR per month.
- ◆ 64 percent of the visual artists make less than 1 300 EUR per month.

Social and economic reality of visual artists

- ◇ 70 percent don't get any economic compensation when caring for sick children.
- ◇ 50 percent don't get any economic compensation when they are sick themselves.
- ◇ 67 percent aren't covered by an unemployment benefit.

Will the 2015 enquiry improve the welfare of visual artists?

- ◇ Artists with an incorporated company - yes
- ◇ Artists with many short employments - yes
- ◇ Artists with a small proprietorship (80-90 percent) - no
- ◇ Artists with short or long term government grants - no

Amendments to 2015 social security enquiry

- *The enquiry should be completed to incorporate small businesses/proprietorships.*
- *Your income should be taken into account regardless of its origin.*
- *An artistic business should be permitted to a larger extent during unemployment benefits.*
- *Government grants and scholarships should be taken in to account when determining the size of your social security benefits.*

Amendments to 2015 social security enquiry

- *Give artistic small businesses a tax reduction to a breaking point at about 20 000 EUR per year.*
- *Allow artistic small businesses a social security benefit based on their gross income to a breaking point at about 20 000 EUR.*
- *Give the social insurance offices an assignment to raise their capacity and competence on the field of artistic enterprises.*

Social security for visual artists

Amendment of the Swedish public inquiry on social security and welfare,
SOU 2015:21

Visual artists don't expect any favours, but
demand equal social security benefits as
everybody else.