

All CCS and Cross-sectoral Belgium News Working Conditions

Are the unemployment benefits of thousands of Belgian artists at risk?

CREATIVESUNITE

Co-funded by the European Union

According to a report in L'echo, the reform of unemployment benefits proposed by the Ministry of Employment will mean the abolition of the status of artist.

Thousands of Belgian artists will lose access to unemployment benefits if a reform proposed by the country's employment minister, David Clarinval, goes through, according to L'echo. The Belgian newspaper explains that this would be tantamount to abolishing the status of artist.

L'echo reports that the time limit on unemployment benefits is on the table, which is estimated to affect around 8,000 beneficiaries.

For several decades, artists have benefited from an unemployment scheme that takes into account the specific nature of their activity, which is intermittent. Until now, this special scheme has made it easier for them to maintain their rights and the level of their benefits according to periods of work or inactivity.

Although the Employment Minister's office has not confirmed the news, various sources have told the newspaper that the reform plan will establish common rules for all unemployed people under the age of 55, including artists. This means that an unemployed person will have to have worked for 312 days in the last three years to qualify for the maximum one-year unemployment benefit. Five years of work will entitle to a maximum of two years of unemployment benefit.

The aim of the reform proposed by Employment Minister David Clarinval is to ensure that there is no discrimination, but it could cause legal problems because, as L'Echo comments, it would mean the disappearance of the special unemployment scheme for artists.

According to the Belgian newspaper, the abolition of the artist's status is not part of the government's agreement and the issue is politically sensitive as it seems difficult to accept by the

Vooruit and CD&V parties in the governing coalition. L'echo recalls that the two government partners were up in arms when MR party leader Georges-Louis Bouchez questioned the usefulness of the Ministry of Culture's existence and denounced "subsidised culture".

Quoting sources familiar with the matter, L'echo points out that the abolition of the status of artist will de facto mark the adoption of the liberal concept of culture, as it will make it impossible for many creators to access unemployment benefits.

--
Photo credit: Israyosoy S.
Photo source