

Dutch Man Sues to Legally Change His Age from 69 to 49

A 69-year-old Dutch man who claims to feel much younger than his actual age has gone to court to make himself legally 20 years younger.



Emile Ratelband, a media personality and self-described "positivity guru", recently told a court in Arnhem, Holland, that he did not feel comfortable with his true age and compared his desire to have it legally changed with that of people who identify as transgender. Ratelband said that he would gladly renounce his pension to ensure that there were no unforeseen consequences, and tried to convince the judges that slashing two decades from his real age would have a hugely positive impact on all aspects of his life.

"We live in a time when you can change your name and change your gender. Why can't I decide my own age?" the Dutch man asked. "When I'm 69, I am limited. If I'm 49, then I can buy a new house, drive a different car, I can take up more work. When I'm on Tinder and it says I'm 69, I don't get an answer. When I'm 49, with the face I have, I will be in a luxurious position."

Mr Ratelband's case against his local authority after they refused to legally change his birth date from 11 March 1949 to 11 March 1969 has caused controversy in his home country. Even the judges conceded that a few years ago legal gender changes were considered impossible, while these days they are common in many developed countries, but at the same time pointed out that his request does raise some questions, like what happens to the 20 years that would be erased.

"Who were your parents looking after then? Who was that little boy?" one of the judges asked Ratelband, hinting that the change would essentially erase part of his life. However, the positivity guru seemed unfazed by the questions, answering only that both his parents were dead.

"It is really a question of free will," Ratelband told the court, adding that he feels discriminated against because of his age. He claims that companies are reluctant to hire a 69-year-old pensioner as a consultant, while 49-year-olds have better chances of getting hired.

To convince the judges, Emile Ratelband described himself as a "young god" and said that a medical check-up showed that his biological age was actually 45.

"I have done a check-up and what does it show? My biological age is 45 years," the man said.

The court is expected to deliver their ruling in this case in the next four weeks.

(452 words)