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## Freedom Of The Press - Denmark (2011)

**Status: Free**  
**Legal Environment: 2**  
**Political Environment: 6**  
**Economic Environment: 5**  
**Total Score: 13**

The aftermath of the cartoon crisis still affected Danish media in 2010, but press freedoms remained intact. Freedom of speech is protected in Section 77 of the constitution, and the government generally respects these rights in practice. However, certain legal restrictions exist for libel, blasphemy, and racism. The fallout from the newspaper *Jyllands-Posten's* 2005 publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad escalated in 2010. The 'bomb-in-turban' cartoonist, Kurt Westergaard, continued to receive protection by the authorities. On January 1 Somali national Mohamed Geele entered Westergaard's house and attempted to murder him with an axe. The attack failed, but concerns for the cartoonist's life remain.

In February, the major daily newspaper *Politiken* signed an agreement with Saudi lawyer Faisal Yamani, apologizing for republishing the Muhammad cartoons in 2008. The apology was widely criticized by the rest of the Danish press, which had republished the cartoons in 2008 in reaction to arrests after an apparent planned attempt on Westergaard's life. In March, Yamani threatened the collective Danish press with a libel suit in an unknown jurisdiction, but at year's end no legal proceedings were underway. In January 2010, a survey showed heightened self-censorship among Danish writers and artists, but the results of the survey were contested.

The private print media are vibrant, although many papers have clear political sympathies. The 2008 financial crisis led to severe revenue problems for the press, but as yet no major changes have taken place. Government subsidies and the VAT exemption are vital for the press, and state support is available for struggling newspapers. Danmarks Radio, the public broadcaster, operates two general interest television channels, a 24-hour news channel, and four national radio channels. TV2 is a privately run but government-owned television network. State-run television and radio broadcasting is financed by an annual license fee. Public service radio is dominant, but tightly regulated commercial, national, and local radio has some importance. Satellite and cable television are also available, as is a variety of internet-based news. The government does not restrict use of the internet, but some observers contended that a system designed to block child pornography mistakenly blocked other sites. In 2010, 89 percent of the population had access to the internet.