

Danish court blocks media from quoting Facebook 'friends'

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"Information on closed profiles are reserved to people -- the Facebook 'friends' -- who have been authorised to access the profile," the Danish Press Council said.

"That is why media do not in principal have access to use information posted in closed profiles," the media ethics court said, setting a legal precedent on how media can use the Facebook [social networking](#) website.

It added however that this consideration for the closed profile holder could be superseded in some cases if the general interest in the information was big enough.

That had not been the case when the Ekstra Bladet tabloid in July published elements from the closed Facebook profile belonging to Knud Loekke Rasmussen, the brother of Denmark's centre-right government chief Lars Loekke Rasmussen, the council said.

Four journalists at the paper figured among his Facebook "[friends](#)" and thus had access to his comments, which included calling members of the opposition "loudmouth" and "idiot".

The Press Council, an independent body that handles ethics complaints against Danish media, ordered Ekstra Bladet to publish its ruling in the paper.

The council had last April ruled that Danish media could freely use all information posted on "open" Facebook profiles, which are visible to everyone and not limited to the account-holders' approved circle of friends.

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