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Master in Democratic Governance: Democracy and Human Rights in the
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**THE EU AND THE PALESTINIAN MINORITY
IN ISRAEL**

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Abstract

The EU is a major actor on the global scene. In foreign policy, it has a predisposition to act normatively, by exporting norms and making states comply with them. However, this is not always the case as the EU-Israeli relations demonstrate. In particular, an analysis of the EU approach towards the Palestinian minority in Israel will question the true potential of EU normative power to bring about concrete change – and discover the genuine human rights concerns that drive EU external actions. Despite the fact that the EU has not been totally insensitive towards the minority, no consistent policies have been developed so far. This is mostly due to two reasons: the existence of weak legal framework on minority rights and the close interconnection between the status of the minority and the Jewish character of Israel. Because of that, EU actions have been mostly driven by cost-benefit calculations, rather than norms. However, a reconceptualization of the minority is needed. On one hand, a deeper engagement with it will close the gap between EU declarations and actions. On the other hand, by implementing the status of the minority there is possibility to re-discuss the Jewish character of Israel from within.

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