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## The European Parliament and the possible recognition of the Palestinian State

Notizie

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The European Parliament will be voting on Wednesday December 17 or on Thursday December 18 at latest to urge EU member states to recognize a State of Palestine. The motion was initiated in November as a non-binding resolution tabled **by the Unified European Left Party (GUE/NGL) and the Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) groups** in the EU assembly to urge "all EU member states ... to recognise the state of Palestine on the basis of the 1967 borders with Jerusalem as the capital".

The vote, which will take place during the December plenary session in Strasbourg, was originally scheduled to take place at the end of last month but it was postponed at the request of the European People's Party (EPP), the largest political group in the parliament. **In the debate that was held in November, a large majority of MEPs clearly favoured a two state solution to the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, but they disagreed on whether it is appropriate to recognise Palestinian statehood unilaterally at this stage.** The lack of consensus on the timing and the form of the recognition makes this vote politically charged and particularly delicate.

The vote comes amid a wave of pro-recognition sentiment in Europe that followed the escalation of the [Israeli-Gaza conflict](#) in the Summer. Last month, Sweden [became the first sitting EU state to formally recognise Palestine](#). **The 130 other nations that already recognise a Palestinian State include Hungary, Slovakia and Poland although these three countries took this step before joining the EU.** In the last few weeks, British, Irish, French, Portuguese and Spanish parliaments MPs have urged their governments to follow suit by passing non-binding resolutions to recognize Palestine as a state. The United States [cautioned against the unilateral recognition of Palestine](#), calling it "premature" and saying the Palestinian state could only come through a negotiated solution between Israelis and Palestinians. Meanwhile, over 800 Israeli prominent public figures including artists, nobel laureates, and former politicians have [sent a petition to MEPs asking them to support recognition](#).

**For their part, Israel views unilateral moves to recognize a Palestinian state as "irresponsible"** because "it gives the Palestinians the idea that they can get everything they want without negotiations", [said Israeli Foreign Ministry deputy spokesperson, Paul Hirschson](#). "Europe makes it worse as it will be difficult to make them compromise," he added. While Israeli officials said that [a EU Parliament resolution would be merely symbolic, bearing no substantive impact](#), they acknowledge that the European legislative body needs to be taken into consideration, not least because [the EU is Palestine's largest aid donor and Israel's main trade partner](#).

**Lorenzo Piccoli**

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