

**‘This is an EU crisis requiring an EU solution’: Nation and transnational talk in negotiating warrants for further inclusion of refugees**

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Abstract

Social psychological research on social exclusion/inclusion of migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers has shown how problematic descriptions of these “others” are made in ways to negotiate their exclusion. However, little research has examined how inclusion of those worked-up as “others” is negotiated. This study examines negotiating the inclusion of refugees and migrants. It does so through a discursive analysis of transcribed talk in the Dáil Éireann [Irish Parliament]. Debates and parliamentary proceedings in the Dáil between January 1, 2015 and February 3, 2016 (end of the 31<sup>st</sup> Dáil session), when issues migration and refugees were prominent, were sourced to examine how warrants for inclusion were made, received, and, negotiated. These transcripts were subject to discursive analysis that focused on how Teachta Dála or TDs (Members of the Irish Parliament) worked-up and oriented to exclusion/inclusion of migrants and refugees in warranting/rejecting specific policies. Findings show that, first, TDs routinely work-up state of affairs in problematic ways through descriptors such as ‘crisis’, ‘plight of refugees’, or ‘loss of life’ during migration. Second, TDs cast Ireland’s response to this state of affairs in terms of its membership in the European Union. This was done to warrant inclusionary policies towards migrants and refugees, and, to justify these policies when criticized for their limited impact. Versions of Ireland as an EU member state were used to warrant and negotiate policies as an outcome of belonging to this political group than as an independent nation with its own responsibilities and obligations. These findings show that studies on inclusion can usefully examine how specific versions of those already and always included are flexibly employed, alongside versions of “others”.

A major focus for discursive social psychologists has been how social exclusion can be legitimised through constructions of those being excluded. Research on exclusion of non-nation others, such as ‘immigrants’, ‘asylum-seekers’, and, ‘refugees’, has shown that warranting exclusion involves working-up the “other” status (Riggins, 1997) of these groups and their members in ways outwith their mere non-national status, such as constructions of the arrival nation. Talk on inclusion efforts towards refugees are one site where these issues of mobilizing versions of national identity and nation-talk become relevant. Here we examine these aspects in the specific case of what has come to be known as the “refugee crisis” for Europe in the contemporary period (2011-ongoing).

Discursive research shows that warrants for exclusion involve descriptions that offer unfavourable evaluations of immigrants (Rojo & van Dijk, 1997), asylum-seekers (Lynn & Lea, 2003) and refugees (Kirkwood, Goodman, McVittie, & McKinlay, 2015). Warrants also involve orienting to, managing, and, denying the relevance of prejudice, racism, or, xenophobia (Goodman, 2010). Warranting exclusion without explicit references to race or ethnicity of those being excluded has been called ‘discursive deracialisation’ (Reeves, 1983). Warrants for exclusion may involve making relevant differences in behaviour and culture to foreground issues of incompatibility with or threat to the arrival nation (Augoustinos & Every, 2007).

For non-nation others their immanent or current presence in a country which is not their place of birth is routinely treated as problematic. Rojo and van Dijk (1997) show how Spanish politicians constructed immigrants as a threat to Spanish identity and ways of life, while. Van der Valk (2003) shows that French parliamentarians present immigrants as culturally different to the French. On a similar note, Lynn and Lea (2003) show how writers of letters to editors of a UK newspaper differentiate not only between ‘bogus’ and ‘genuine’ asylum-seekers, but also between those deserving ‘Britons’ and those who do not, in warranting differential treatment for asylum-seekers. Warrants for exclusion then can involve constructing nations as constituting a polity that shares particular characteristics and experiences (McKinlay & McVittie, 2008). Alongside this, versions of nations as particular kinds of spaces can also be used in warranting exclusion. Charteris-Black (2006) shows the use of ‘Britain as a container’ (p. 579) metaphor with the implications that it is ‘full’ and can no longer accept further immigration. O’Doherty and Augoustinos (2008) show how nation as a space that needs to be defended was mobilized in warranting and justifying military action against those seeking asylum in Australia. Haynes, Devereux and Breen (2006) show similar findings in Irish print media, where asylum-seekers were constructed as problematic

to Ireland and its borders. These findings where exclusion is warranted without explicit racialisation or ethnicisation of those excluded are subsumed under the thesis of ‘new racism’ (Barker, 2001).

These findings show that non-nation others are routinely treated as problematic to the nation and therefore warrants for their exclusion involve “nationalistic rhetoric” (Billig, 1995). Interestingly, researchers note that versions of nation can also be used to warrant inclusion of asylum-seekers (Every & Augoustinos, 2008). Billig (1995) argues that, in recent times, nations are treated as unnoticed ubiquitous entities that are routinely available as robust rhetorical resources. The role of nation-talk for inclusion-advocacy is particularly salient as warrants for exclusion couched in nation-talk may not be readily challengeable (Every & Augoustinos, 2007). These findings show how warrants for exclusion of non-nation others involve specific versions of national identity and the sovereign rights of a nation to defend its polity, spaces, or, unique characteristics (Gale, 2004).

These issues readily come to the front in contexts where issues of inclusion and exclusion are highly salient and are treated as transnational. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that in 2015 the numbers of displaced peoples across the world exceeded 50 million (Herwig, 2016). However, only 2 million asylum applications were lodged in European countries in 2015 with 3,770 asylum-seekers having died or being “reported missing” (Herwig, 2016). One critical incident was that of sinking of a “refugee boat” in the Mediterranean off the coast of Italy in April 2015 (Kingsley, 2015). In response, in September 2015, the European Union (EU) adopted measures that included accepting 160,000 refugees under the EU Resettlement and Relocation Programme involving each EU member state taking up a certain number of refugees and asylum applications (Metcalf-Hough, 2015). While these measures involved allowing residence to asylum-seekers and refugees, the extent of refuge or inclusion efforts was widely criticized (Metcalf-Hough, 2015). This provides the focus for the current paper, where we examine how issues of further inclusion are warranted and negotiated in instances of transnational concerns. We do so in the case of Ireland an EU member state, which officially pledged to take-in 4,000 refugees for the end of 2017 under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme<sup>1</sup> (Department of Justice and Equality, 2016). What is of interest is how policy-makers work-up and warrant actions taken in respect of refugees. Our analysis of talk in Dáil Éireann, lower house of the Oireachtas, Ireland's parliament, for the calendar year 2015, the 31<sup>st</sup> Dáil,

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<sup>1</sup> This was taken up as part of EU Resettlement and Relocation Programme, which involves accepting refugees from outside the EU and also intra-EU relocation of already admitted refugees (Metcalf-Hough, 2015).

shows that for Teachtaí Dála<sup>2</sup> (Deputies) issues of further inclusion efforts were at stake. In Ireland, the spectrum of political parties comprises parties of diverse ideological affiliations. There are two centre-Right parties – Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil – where the former is liberal-conservative and the latter is a populist centre-right party. There are two Left leaning parties – Labour and Sinn Féin – where the former is a democratic Socialist and the latter is particularly republican. For the 31<sup>st</sup> Dáil, Fine Gael was in power in coalition with Irish Labour party and Fianna Fáil was in the Opposition along with Sinn Féin, Anti-Austerity Alliance (AAA) and other smaller political parties.

Ireland's commitment to offer refuge to 4,000 people was made on September 10, 2015 (Russell, 2015). Prior to this Ireland had offered refuge to 600 people under the EU Relocation programme in 2015. This commitment to increased refuge and assessments of its fairness were topics of discussion in the Dáil. Although, no political party with Deputies had explicitly avowed not offering refuge, politicians from various political parties and independent Deputies were critical of the extent to which Ireland was accommodating those seeking refuge as will be seen in the data being analysed. The focus then is on how warrants for further inclusion are made and how these are managed.

## Method

### Data and participants

The data are taken from proceedings in Dáil Éireann, lower house of the Oireachtas, Ireland's parliament. In parliaments, routine social practices (Potter & Hepburn 2008) include engaging in debates, warranting policies, and, challenging or managing challenges to these policies. These practices are in turn reflected in and shape interactional features, including turn-taking, the use of adjacency pairs, and the forms of challenge that are to be found in local contexts. In the case of the Dáil Éireann, the resulting parliamentary proceedings are available as videos and transcripts, with certain proceedings such as “written answers” available only as transcripts for obvious reasons. Data for this study were taken where possible from transcription of video recordings, and in other instances from pre-transcribed records of parliamentary businesses available on the Oireachtas website: <http://debates.oireachtas.ie/>.

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<sup>2</sup> Irish Members of Parliament

Proceedings for the calendar year 2015 (31<sup>st</sup> Dáil<sup>3</sup>) were collected, during which period Dáil Éireann was convened 118 times where issues of migration and refuge were discussed under various proceedings. To enable a representative sample, random-number tables were used to select one-fourth (approximately 30 days) of these parliamentary days. Proceedings of interest included queries on the number of refugees to be relocated to Ireland, Irish government's culpability in and response to the refugee crisis, and human rights issues. From those, relevant proceedings were accessed on video and transcribed according to Jeffersonian system of transcription (Jefferson, 2004) for fine-grained analysis. Pre-transcribed "written answers" are reproduced here without changes to words or grammar. These data were thoroughly read and re-read to identify those proceedings where issues of inclusion were discussed by Deputies. Select instances were further analysed for this paper as described below.

### **Analytical procedure**

These data were analysed using discourse analysis (McKinlay & McVittie, 2008; Potter & Edwards, 2001), which treats discourse as a topic of study in its own right. The analytical procedure employed drew on principles of discursive social psychology to examine social psychological concerns as discursive constructions and focus on accomplishments of participants themselves (Potter & Hepburn, 2008). The analysis examined properties and features of discourse that allow for accomplishing specific social actions as part of social practices in the particular setting of this parliament. Here, the focus was on how specific versions of the ongoing issues of refuge, inclusion, Ireland, and, the EU were constructed as relevant for the ongoing business of the Oireachtas. In that, the analysis particularly attended to the rhetorical aspects of political talk (Condor, Tileagâ, & Billig, 2013) that involves questioning those in the Government, responding to these questions and stating a position in a debate. The analysis focused on how speakers constructed various versions of state of affairs, such as migration, and relevant agents and actors, such as refugees, migrants, and, policy-makers and the outcomes that these accomplished.

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<sup>3</sup> For the 31<sup>st</sup> Dáil Fine Gael was in power in coalition with Irish Labour party and Fianna Fáil were in the Opposition with Sinn Féin, Anti-Austerity Alliance and other smaller political parties.

## Results

The issue of Ireland's potential inclusion of refugees was raised in two somewhat different ways. The first of these introduced the possibility of Ireland taking further action aimed at inclusion, while the second foregrounded the actions of the EU. We start by examining exchanges that began by referring to Irish actions.

The first extract comes from pre-transcribed proceedings dated October 13, 2015. The Deputies here are Micheál Martin a Deputy for Fianna Fáil and Deputy Frances Fitzgerald who was the Minister for Justice and Equality in the Government. Martin's written question introduces the possibility of inclusion of 'more refugees from war-torn countries like Syria' (line 2) being allowed to reside in Ireland ('here').

### *Extract 1*

- 1 154. Deputy Micheál Martin asked the Minister for Justice and Equality her plans to  
2 allow more refugees from war-torn countries like Syria to reside here; and if she will  
3 make a statement on the matter. [28226/15]  
4 Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald): Ireland has always  
5 lived up to its international humanitarian obligations and we are fully committed to  
6 playing our part in addressing the current migrant crisis facing Europe.  
7 The Government is committed to working at European level to find sustainable  
8 solutions to the migration crisis. This humanitarian crisis is an EU issue which  
9 requires a coordinated EU response and I have made it clear to our European partners  
10 that Ireland will work closely and collaboratively with them in this regard.

Fitzgerald orients to Martin's question as a warrant for further inclusion of refugees in Ireland and manages the implication that ongoing inclusive efforts are inadequate. Her response, through the extreme case formulation (Pomerantz, 1986) 'always', works-up Ireland as normatively predisposed to fulfilling 'international humanitarian obligations' (line 4). She continues by reformulating the issue at hand as a 'migration crisis facing Europe' (lines 5-6) instead of being one involving 'refugees' as proposed by Martin's question. This reformulation allows her to describe Ireland as being disposed to giving aid or refuge to non-nation others while presenting that as only one part of a broader response in that Ireland is

‘playing our part’ (line 5). Her description thereby works to undermine any challenge that Ireland is not making appropriate efforts while also constructing the issue as one that is relevant to other actors, such as EU member states.

In casting the ongoing issues as relevant for ‘Europe’, Fitzgerald makes relevant a disjunction between legitimate responses from Ireland, despite its dispositions, and alternative responses relevant at ‘European level’ (line 7). In that, she renders the issue and responses to it as connected in ways that offer particular limitations and opportunities for Ireland to take-up actions: ‘This humanitarian crisis is an EU issue which requires a coordinated EU response’ (lines 8-9). Ireland’s actions are cast as limited and viable only in collaboration with ‘European partners’ (line 9). Her avowals of taking-up ‘sustainable solutions’ (lines 7-8), specific to ‘The Government’ (line 7), manage issues of blame, while casting these as at ‘European level’ offers limitations on possible actions. In doing this, she works-up a “middle-ground” position that avows commitment to inclusive actions for Ireland while mitigating warrants for further inclusive efforts.

The next extract was video-transcribed from a recording of a debate on February 17, 2015. This exchange involves Deputy Clare Daly of the AAA and Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin of the Irish Labour Party. Here, Daly’s question treats Ireland as culpable in the displacement of peoples. We see Ó Ríordáin orienting to this as a warrant for further inclusion efforts from Ireland.

*Extract 2*

- 1 Daly I think the other critical point is (.hh) the destabilising fact that we have  
2 the biggest movement of refugees since world war two absolutely linked  
3 to the crisis in the Middle East and the crisis in Africa stirred up by  
4 imperialist intervention are we in Ireland (.) we can’t maybe change the  
5 world but we can make a start in our own backyard are we going to say  
6 no to that and stop the use of Shannon ehh and that role in that.
- 7 Ó Ríordáin: go raibh maith agat a Leas-Ceann Comhairle<sup>4</sup> and to thank the deputies  
8 again as I said earlier there are no easy answers here (1.1) nobody can  
9 guarantee that there won’t be further deaths (1.) as long as people set out  
10 on these hazardous (.) voyages that is inevitable in spite of the best

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<sup>4</sup> In Irish: Thank you Deputy Chief Speaker

11                   efforts of everybody involved in maritime missions (.h) it's a case of  
12                   working together within the EU on both cause and effect the contribution  
13                   Ireland can make apart from its support for EU initiatives in the en-a-area  
14                   generally is primarily humanitarian with particular reference to Syria we  
15                   are one of the highest contributors to the humanitarian response on a per  
16                   capita basis.

At lines 1-4, Daly works-up the ongoing issues as extremely problematic, with the extreme-case formulation 'biggest movement of refugees since world war two' (line 2) rhetorically emphasising that these issues need particular attention. She however treats as relevant Ireland's role in the issue and particular efforts at addressing these at lines 4-6. Daly does this through conceding that while the causes involved may be hard to address by Ireland herself, certain actions may be taken-up: 'are we going to say no to that and stop the use of Shannon ehh and that role in that' (lines 5-6). The action-warrant itself directly address the ascribed causes for the displacement of people through the place-label 'Shannon' (line 6). For the Deputies present it is readily available (Kitzinger, 2000) that Shannon Airport in Ireland is used by United States military as a transit facility.

In response, Ó Ríordáin constructs actions being taken-up from within the EU as more relevant than those of Ireland itself. He does this through reformulating the issue in terms of particular activities of displaced peoples rather than the people themselves. At lines 8-11, Ó Ríordáin works-up 'deaths' of displaced peoples as 'inevitable' (line 10) and outwith the control of 'best efforts of everybody involved in maritime missions' through particular descriptions: 'as long as people set out on these hazardous (.) voyages'. Here the extreme case-formulated action-descriptors of various actors involved in rescue efforts, such as 'nobody can guarantee' (lines 8-9) and 'everybody involved' (line 11) work to mitigate potential ascription of causes for movement and its extreme outcomes. In prefacing this recasting of the issue as not having 'easy answers' (line 8), Ó Ríordáin, sets-up alternative ways for taking-up actions than those made relevant by Daly. These actions for Ireland are presented as 'it's a case of working together within the EU' (lines 11-12). Ó Ríordáin thus offers a limited scope for Ireland to take-up activities and particularly as working within the remit of the EU. To counter potential issues of reduced agency for Ireland, he also offers other possible activities that 'Ireland can make apart from its support for EU initiatives' (line 13), which are 'primarily humanitarian' (line 14). His extremely favourable description of Ireland's ongoing efforts 'with particular reference to Syria' (line 14) offer the inference that

these actions outwith the EU are indeed useful. In this way, Ó Ríordáin rebuts Daly's warrant for certain unique actions for Ireland in addressing ongoing issues and treats ongoing actions within and without EU as appropriate.

In the two extracts above, we saw Deputies deal with the potential inclusion of 'refugees' by reformulating the issue under discussion and attributing responsibility elsewhere (the EU), thereby justifying Ireland's actions and obviating the need for further action. We now consider exchanges that foregrounded the role of the EU. Extract 3 was taken from pre-transcribed proceedings dated December 15, 2015, involving Bernard J Durkin and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Charles Flanagan both from Fine Gael.

*Extract 3*

1 495. Deputy Bernard J. Durkan asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if the  
2 European Union is likely to speak with one voice in addressing the humanitarian and  
3 refugee issues arising from conflict in the Middle East; and if he will make a statement  
4 on the matter. [45675/15]  
5 Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Charles Flanagan): The scale of the  
6 migration challenge facing the international community is enormous. The conflict in  
7 Syria - the biggest driver behind this year's migrant flows - has led to the world's  
8 largest humanitarian crisis. But the problem is bigger than Syria. An estimated 60  
9 million displaced people worldwide are on the move, the highest since World War II.  
10 They are coming not just from Syria but from such places such as Afghanistan, Iraq,  
11 Gaza and a dozen or so countries in sub-Saharan and North Africa.  
12 For most of this year Migration has been at the very top of the EU agenda. There have  
13 been no fewer than five special meetings of Justice and Home Affairs ministers  
14 devoted to migration while Heads of State and Government have debated the issue in  
15 three special councils. I and my foreign minister colleagues have also addressed the  
16 issue many times this year.

In the Extract above, Durkan treats the issue at hand as being that of a coordinated effort from those in 'the European Union' (line 2): the question is whether they will 'speak with one voice' (line 2). In doing this, Durkan treats it as relevant that, efforts at addressing 'humanitarian and refugee issues arising from conflict in the Middle East' (line 3-4) are uniform across the member states of the EU. The question hearably raises concerns over

varying levels of responses to the ‘issues’, which might involve Ireland participating in perceivably greater inclusive efforts than other EU member states.

In response, Flanagan avows efforts being taken up to address these issues, which issues however are worked-up as being extreme in scale and size through offering other sources for displacement of people than merely ‘the conflict in the Middle East’ (lines 3-4). Flanagan introduces a broader set of actors than the EU, namely ‘the international community’ (line 5) (cf. McKinlay, McVittie & Sambaraju, 2011) as those who are facing an extreme ‘migration challenge’ (line 5). The extreme nature of the ‘challenge’ is worked-up through taking-up the description of the reasons for migration offered by Durkan, namely the ‘conflict in Syria - the biggest driver behind this year’s migrant flows - has led to the world’s largest humanitarian crisis’ (lines 6-7), but also through a listing of other geo-political areas. Flanagan thereby treats the responses required as being of a broader scale, such as those of the ‘international community’ than merely those of the EU, let alone Ireland, and alternative policies and measures that may treat inclusion as secondary to economic assistance towards particular geo-political configurations or other longer term plans.

Flanagan’s subsequent descriptions of policy-activities being taken up by the EU and Ireland, at lines 12-16, show commitment to addressing issues of refuge than abandoning efforts in light of the complexities involved. Together, Durkan’s question and Flanagan’s response cast the issue and responses to it as EU matters, which does not treat inclusion efforts as relevant.

As seen, the question in Extract 3 is framed in terms of anticipated unity within the EU (‘one voice’) inviting a confirmatory response. References to the EU in Extracts 1 and 2, although not developed at length, also suggested that it represented a unitary entity. Our final extract begins with a discussion of the EU and its actions but is framed in somewhat different terms. This exchange follows a discussion of the possibility of the United Kingdom leaving the EU leading to the fabric of the EU being undermined. That discussion provides the immediate context in which The Taoiseach<sup>5</sup> Enda Kenny describes Ireland’s inclusion efforts. This extract comes from a video-transcript of a debate in the Dáil on September 29, 2015.

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<sup>5</sup> The Prime Minister of Ireland

*Extract 4*

1   Kenny       Deputy Barrett speaks about Europe being at a dangerous crossroads and  
2               he-your right here there are a whole range of issues that are (.) very  
3               sensitive uhm very difficult to resolve (.) and uhm very very real (.) uhm  
4               (hh) in at last week's European Council meeting which was ah very  
5               constructive meeting actually the fault lines that now apply because of what  
6               is happening in Syria Libya and so on like that were very clear (.) with over  
7               a million gone into south Lebanon (.) million gone into Jordan (.) (hh) were  
8               both of these countries to collapse (hh) under the:: uh under the fact that  
9               there is no real plan to deal with that humanitarian crisis (hh) then the issue  
10              for Europe ah is not just m-me-millions in single figures but millions in  
11              double figures an when you hear a prime minister saying like what happens  
12              when they leave Turkey which is a very short distance from some of the  
13              Greek isles (h) that as soon as a boat appears (h) ah dinghies that are (.)  
14              grossly overladen with people are ripped asunder with knives so that they  
15              end up in the water and have to be saved or drowned (.) ah you can you-can  
16              understand the eh challenge that this face that this presents (hh) and when  
17              small countries have huge numbers of people walking with women an  
18              children an in many cases fatigued and exhausted (h) uhm and expected to  
19              be registered under the Dublin Agreement and the Schengen Agreement it  
20              presents the logistics that they are not able to cope with (hh) uhm Germany  
21              have taken in five hundred thousand uh refugees this year uhm Ireland a  
22              small country not a member of Schengen (h) not inside the protocol (hh)  
23              uhm u-uh offering ourselves voluntarily because of our own tradition to  
24              take four thousand here

Our focus is on how Kenny works-up ongoing issues as severely and particularly problematic for Europe in contextualising Ireland's efforts. Kenny describes particular problematic events – 'fault lines that now apply' (line 5) – in 'Syria Libya and so on' (line 6) as resulting in displacement of people: 'over a million gone into south Lebanon (.) million gone into Jordan'

(lines 6-7). Kenny works up their relevance for Europe in a specific way: ‘were both of these countries to collapse (.hh) under the:: uh under the fact that there is no real plan to deal with that humanitarian crisis (.hh) then the issue for Europe ah is not just m-me-millions in single figures but millions in double figures’ (lines 8-11). This is furthered in ascribing problematic actions to unspecified agents: ‘as soon as a boat appears (.h) ah dinghies that are (.) grossly overladen with people are ripped asunder with knives so that they end up in the water’ (lines 13-15). This readily offers inferences on intentions of those damaging the ‘dinghies’ and therefore treats as problematic – ‘challenge’ – the possibly preferred actions to resolve this, namely those of saving people than letting them drown. Kenny thus works-up actions of saving people and subsequent inclusion as possibly problematic. He offers further inferences on issues with providing refuge through descriptions of nation-states in the EU, made inferable through specifications of treaties such as ‘the Dublin Agreement and the Schengen Agreement’ (lines 19-20), and, of actions and dispositional states of those worked-up as seeking refuge. First, he works-up a disproportion in capacities for offering refuge: ‘small countries have huge numbers of people walking’ (line 17). Second, descriptions of those seeking refuge including their dispositions offer inferences of problems in readily providing or rejecting refuge: ‘people walking with women and children and in many cases fatigued and exhausted (.h) uhm and expected to be registered’ (lines 18-19). Through these descriptions, he emphasises the scope of the challenge facing the EU: the current situation ‘presents the logistics that they are not able to cope with’ (line 20). In doing this, he constructs ongoing issues as constituting a “crisis” for Europe.

Kenny’s subsequent descriptions of inclusion activities of ‘Germany’ and ‘Ireland’ are offered to show that these activities are relevantly appropriate given the ‘challenge’ of the crisis: ‘taken in five hundred thousand uh refugees this year’ (lines 20-21) and ‘take four thousand here’ (lines 23-24) respectively. Ireland’s inclusion activities are couched in particular descriptions: ‘a small country not a member of Schengen (.h) not inside the protocol (.hh) uhm u-uh offering ourselves voluntarily because of our own tradition’ (line 23). This allows for inferring that Ireland’s inclusion activities, being taken-up despite constraints, are attributable to its unique national characteristic (Every & Augoustinos, 2008), here that of offering aid. In doing this and in working-up ongoing issues as a complex “crisis”, Kenny thus presents Ireland’s efforts as not just adequate but commendable in the circumstances described.

## Conclusions

Here we examined Irish Deputies' policy discussions in Dáil Éireann on efforts being taken-up towards inclusion of refugees. The findings show that for Deputies at stake was the adequacy of ongoing inclusion efforts taken up by Ireland directed towards refugees rather than inclusion itself. Further inclusion was warranted through making relevant Ireland's capacities for further inclusion and managed by avowals of commitment juxtaposed to casting the issues as EU concerns. Deputies in the Government managed issues of being unsympathetic or unwilling to offer refuge. Making relevant actions at EU level allowed Deputies to circumvent issues of further inclusion efforts for Ireland. Deputies constructed the ongoing issues as a 'European issue' in mitigating unique efforts that Ireland on its own could take-up. These constructions involved detailed descriptions, including event descriptions and geographical detail, in working-up the issue as extremely problematic. Deputies rendered issues of inclusion as complex and therefore could legitimately make references to joint efforts at inclusion, such as those cast as European efforts.

Previous findings on exclusion of non-nation others focus on how nations were constructed as singular and specific entities with particular polity characteristics, history, and dispositions (O'Doherty & Augoustinos, 2008). These findings show that nationalism and nationalistic rhetoric was strategically mobilized in legitimizing exclusion in ways that undermined ready implications of xenophobia, racism or prejudice (Barker, 2001). The current findings then deviate from previous findings in two important ways: first, unique aspects of a nation can be used to warrant inclusion and serve to legitimize avowals for inclusion (cf. Augoustinos & Every, 2007). Second, these can also be upended to mitigate calls for further inclusion. This is particularly accomplished by making relevant belonging to wider transnational collectives.

The mundane availability of nations as readily knowable entities (Billig, 1995) allows for ready differentiation of those who are included and those who can be excluded. This can be mobilized in legitimizing differential treatment of those not belonging to the national polity (O'Doherty & Augoustinos, 2008). However, the current findings show that not only nation, but also relevant transnational collectives can be similarly mobilized. Thus, we see references to the EU as a body, to which responsibility for addressing the challenges of inclusion and for dealing with the 'crisis' can be attributed. This allows the issue at hand to be reframed as one for Ireland bears no individual responsibility but in respect of which it can claim credit for the efforts that it is already making. In constructing the issue in these terms,

speakers can draw upon the EU as a form of 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1983), whereby speakers 'will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (p.49). Thus, in Extracts 1, 2 and 3, we see Deputies draw upon such a version of community in their attributions of responsibility for addressing inclusion. The talk in Extract 4, however, differs. Immediately prior to Kenny's turn, discussion has focused on the potential fragmentation of the EU, an issue that Kenny takes up in the early part of his turn. In this context, it would be somewhat challenging to make the case for the EU as a single imagined community. We therefore see Kenny turn instead to providing descriptions of Ireland's actions and motivations in taking steps towards addressing inclusion of refugees.

What all of these constructions accomplish, regardless of the relative emphasis given to Ireland's actions and those of the EU, is to mitigate warrants for further inclusion. While previous research highlights the centrality of treating nation as a singular and specific entity, these versions need not always be relevant for warranting exclusion. Rather, these are specific to particular contexts and institutional settings. Alternative versions of nation and nation's remit can be employed in negotiating inclusion, which may involve reduced claims to sovereignty (cf. Gale, 2004). At a broader level, the use of nation's belonging to a transnational collective works to treat as irrelevant aspects of possible resistance to inclusion, such as xenophobia or ethnocentrism, in negotiating inclusion/exclusion of social groups such as refugees and asylum-seekers. Future social psychological research can usefully examine how constructions of arrival nations and those who are already and always included are flexibly deployed in negotiation inclusion claims. Similarly, inclusion advocates can perhaps usefully attend to the flexibility of using nationalistic rhetoric and transnationalism in advancing inclusion efforts (Geddes, 2003).

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