



# Taming the Shock: EU Education of Ukrainian Refugees through the Lesson of Ian Hacking

## Domare lo Shock: Educazione dell'UE dei rifugiati ucraini attraverso la lezione di Ian Hacking

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## ABSTRACT

The tragic event of the war in Ukraine has prompted the EU to promote welfare-type educational policies, such as those expressed in the Cohesion's Actions for Refugees (CARE), and to rely on a large amount of statistical data. The category of the Ukrainian refugee, developed through this type of knowledge, is framed in the article as an expression of a positivistic-inferential process. This is prominent in industrial societies and is interpreted through the key concepts of «probability» and «normal state», explored in *The Taming of Chance* (1990) by Ian Hacking. The history of the present, that emerges from these analytical concepts, can help to relativize the evidence of contemporary international policy making. This allows us to reflect on the ongoing normalization towards the Ukrainian refugee. The educational action is deprived of the relational generative potential to be caged within the dichotomy between the needy refugee student and the Western actors who "save".

L'evento tragico della guerra in Ucraina ha spinto l'UE a promuovere politiche educative di tipo assistenziale, come quelle espresse nelle Cohesion's Actions for Refugees (CARE), e ad appoggiarsi su un gran numero di dati statistici. La categoria del rifugiato ucraino, sviluppata attraverso questo tipo di conoscenza, viene inquadrata nell'articolo come espressione di un processo positivistico-inferenziale, preminente nelle società industriali, e viene interpretata attraverso i concetti-chiave di «probabilità» e di «stato normale», approfonditi in *The Taming of Chance* (1990) di Ian Hacking. La storia del presente che si ricava da questi concetti di analisi può aiutare a relativizzare le evidenze delle policy making internazionali contemporanee e, in particolare, permette di riflettere sulla normalizzazione in atto nei confronti del rifugiato ucraino. L'azione educativa viene privata del potenziale generativo relazionale per essere ingabbiata entro la dicotomia tra l'alunno profugo bisognoso e gli attori occidentali "salvatori".

### KEYWORDS

Reasoning style, Inclusion, Statistics, Refugee, Ukraine  
Stile di ragionamento, Inclusione, Statistica, Rifugiato, Ucraina

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## 1. Introduction

The tragic event of the war in Ukraine has prompted the EU to direct its member states towards plans for the refugee protection plans. The indications of the European organization can be found in various documents, one of which is fundamental the *Cohesion's Actions for Refugees in Europe* (CARE), approved on 6 April 2022 (EU, 2022a; 2022b). These sources recognize education among the strategic fields for the inclusion of refugees and prefigure aid interventions in present and future scenarios based on demographic, social and economic data. This EU action may be a case among the discussions on the use of statistics in the contemporary governance of education, a debate that has taken on an international dimension in research (Hartong & Piattoeva, 2021; Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2020a; Tröhler & Maricic, 2021; Ydesen, 2019) especially since the success of *Trust in Numbers* (1995) by Theodore Porter. This study fits into that discussion field. It traces a "history of the present" (Foucault, 2004) on the political-educational statistical style of the EU to try to place contents of reflexivity on the priority of objectivity and planning (typical of a standardizing ideal) with respect to the creative and transformative principle (typical of the relational educational ideal).

The study develops two types of analyses to pursue this aim. Firstly, it contextualizes the EU's style towards the Ukrainian refugees in the general culture of objectivity which has established itself through statistical practices since the 19th century (Sections 2, 3 and 6); today this culture is more vital than ever in the trust placed both in policy planning and in the fortune of probabilistic theories (Hacking, 2012; Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2020a; Porter, 2018). Secondly, this study delves into the kind of subjectivity that the EU education develops on Ukrainian refugees, based on evidence of linguistic, psychological and social needs and oriented from the perspective of normalization (Sections 3, 4 and 6).

The book *The Taming of Chance* (1990) by Ian Hacking is the content and methodological reference for the analysis of this work.

A systematic study of more than forty years of heterogeneous scientific activity by the Canadian philosopher is missing, even if there are excellent "occasional" summaries (Fuller, 2004; Vagelli, 2017; Vagelli & Setaro, 2021). The very fruitful research of Hacking, in which he blends the tradition of Anglo-American analytic thinkers (Michael Dummett, Ludwig Wittgenstein) with continental thought (Michel Foucault) in an original way, has penetrated equally heterogeneous philosophical debates between the natural, social and medical sciences.

His fields of investigation (as Hacking himself has expressed since the 1990s) stem from his initial reflection on Kant's *a priori* and from his concern to clarify the conditions of objectivity. The general macro-question of this philosophical program has been well summarized as follows: «How can the objective and scientific status of our claims be, if not weakened, at least redefined by the acknowledgment of their historical and therefore provisional nature?» (Vagelli & Setaro, 2021, p. 116).

In recent years, *The Taming of Chance* has been

considered a very important reference in educational studies, as is detailed in section 5. The book is essential for the analysis of this article for: the genealogical study of probabilistic reason, the way of deconstructing the concept of objectivity (emphasizing the variation and historical contextualization), the close connection highlighted between normality and prescriptions, as well as between statistical evidence and subjectivation.

## 2. The data avalanche

One of the most dramatic chapters of the Ukrainian war, which broke out in February 2022, is the conversion of millions of people into refugees. Many refugees have poured into European territory (3.9 in total on 31 March 2023), among whom are mainly children, women and the elderly (Eurostat, 2023a). Coinciding with the war, the EU activated a large system among international bodies for monitoring the flow of people from Ukraine, which adds to the already existing collection of data on immigrants. The Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) constantly collects data from member states, draws up maps on grants of temporary protection and publishes articles. All this work, conducted in extremely sophisticated and rigorous forms, produces data, made easily accessible through the institutional site, which bears the following index:

«(1) Population in Ukraine, by sex and age. (2) Population with Ukrainian citizenship. (3) Ukrainian citizens residing in an EU Member State. (4) Persons born in Ukraine and residing in an EU Member State. (5) Ukrainian citizens migrating in an EU Member State. (6) Immigrants born in Ukraine. (7) Immigrants whose previous country of residence was Ukraine. (8) First residence permits issued to Ukrainian citizens. (9) All valid residence permits held by Ukrainians on 31 December of each year. (10) Temporary protection issued to Ukrainian citizens. (11) Temporary protection issued to unaccompanied Ukrainian minors. (12) First-time asylum applicants with Ukrainian citizenship. (13) Students from Ukraine» (Eurostat, 2023b).

This statistical content allows comparisons between states and people at multiple levels (difference in age, gender, profession, and specific regions of Ukraine) for time intervals. If, for example, we take the category of minors for January 2023, we find that Germany granted the largest number of temporary protections with a total of 8,275 (representing 29% of Ukrainians granted protection in Germany in January 2023), followed by Poland (6,800, 24%) and Romania (2,905, 32%). If we look, as another example, at the overall data on flows, it appears that as of 31 January 2023, the highest numbers of Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection were registered in Germany (971,920 people) and Poland (969,425 people) (Eurostat, 2023c).

These demographic numbers do not serve as a scientific investigation in themselves, but determine forms and methods of government intervention. They

are intertwined with economic data (diagnosis and prospects on energy availability and international growth) and financial availability. In this way the EU elaborates its own evidence to affirm regulations and indications to the member states. These are called to integrate young people and support them within their institutional structures. In particular, after the EU Council unanimously approved the protection of those fleeing Ukraine on 4 March 2022, the same body issued on 6 April, jointly with the Parliament and the Cohesion's Actions for Refugees in Europe (CARE), the fundamental guideline for orienting national actions on the refugee policy in an articulated way, embracing health, work and social fields. Education represents one of these strategic dimensions (EU, 2022a; 2022b).

In Italy, the Ministry of Education, on 4 March 2022, issued a circular, aimed at activating linguistic and psychological assistance for the first Ukrainian refugees (Ministry of Education, 2022a). A subsequent circular of 24 March recalled previous intercultural regulations and practices of Italian schools (Ministry of Education, 2022b). Finally, with a decree dated February 15 of the following year, the ministry allocated economic resources from the National Operational Program for Learning Skills and Environments 2014 – 2022, for courses «aimed at promoting the inclusion of male and female students and of students and their parents from Ukraine in the new educational and social context, also through a strengthening of key competences» (Ministry of Education and Merit, 2023, p. 1).

The form of EU action that is based on numerical evidence and that reverberates in the policies of the member states is linked to the genesis and affirmation of statistical practices during the nineteenth century of which the study *The Taming of Chance* (1990) highlights. Through the genealogical approach of Michel Foucault, in this book Ian Hacking delves into the historical development of probabilistic reasoning, which has supplanted deterministic or causal thinking.

Since the 18th century and especially since the 19th century, various authors have written about probability and also about statistics, so much so that it has grown as an autonomous discipline. However, probabilistic reason did not assert itself primarily through a “theory”, but through social practices, which made it possible. New administrative actions have been fundamental in this sense: techniques of counting and classification, institutions equipped with personnel, authority and continuity to be able to use them.

«During the nineteenth century it became possible to see that the world might be regular and yet not subject to universal laws of nature. A space was cleared for chance. This erosion of determinism made little immediate difference to anyone. Few were aware of it. Something else was pervasive and everybody came to know about it: the enumeration of people and their habits. Society became statistical» (Hacking, 1990, p. 1).

### 3. *The Taming of Chance* (1990)

Hacking has dealt with the topic of probability in important publications, including the books *Logic of Statistical Inference* (1965), *The Emergence of Probability*

(1975), and *An Introduction to Probability and Inductive Logic* (2001), as well as a series of articles written mainly between the 1960s and 1990s, including *How should We Do the History of Statistics?* (1981) and *Statistical Language, Statistical Truth, and Statistical Reason*, published in 1992 (Martínez, 2014; Vagelli, 2017). *The Taming of Chance* is linked in particular to the 1975 book and also to various studies published in the 1980s by colleagues such as Lorraine Daston, Ted Porter, Stephen Stigler, William Coleman, Donald MacKenzie, who, like Hacking, are part of a Cambridge research group, inspired by the ideas of Lorenz Krüger (Hacking, 1990).

The publication of an «avalanche of numbers» (Hacking, 1990, p. 3) on human behavior (suicide and crime, madness, disease, soldiers' chest measurements) accompanied the development of the state in post-Napoleonic Europe through institutions such as the National Debt Office of the United Kingdom, the French Ministry of Justice and the Prussian Statistical Office. The United States administration also embraced the practice of printed numerical data.

«The first American census asked four questions of each household. The tenth decennial census posed 13,010 questions on various schedules addressed to people, firms, farms, hospitals, churches and so forth. This 3,000-fold increase is striking, but vastly understates the rate of growth of printed numbers: 300,000 would be a better estimate» (Hacking, 1990, p. 2).

This data, which will henceforth be increasingly produced by governments, show surprising regularities over time, which have also extended to the social and natural sciences.

Hacking then shows the progressive conquest of the law of probability in various disciplines, «after social phenomena had been enumerated, tabulated and made public» (Hacking, 1990, p. 3): the empirical sciences of morality, medicine, the mathematics of Pierre-Simon Laplace (1749 – 1827) and Siméon-Denis Poisson who influenced the law; sociological research intertwined with new statistical laws by Adolphe Quételet (1796 – 1894), Émile Durkheim (1858 – 1917), Francis Galton (1822 – 1911) and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839 – 1914), who dedicated almost thirty years to improve measuring devices in the United States Coast Survey; finally the quantum physics, which from the 1920s began to develop new theories on the nature of matter in stochastic terms.

The hegemony of probabilistic reasoning has survived to this day.

«Turn then to the most worldly affairs. Probability and statistics crowd in upon us. The statistics of our pleasures and our vices are relentlessly tabulated. Sports, sex, drink, drugs, travel, sleep, friends – nothing escapes. There are more explicit statements of probabilities presented on American prime time television than explicit acts of violence (I'm counting the ads). Our public fears are endlessly debated in terms of probabilities: chances of meltdowns, cancers, muggings, earthquakes, nuclear winters, AIDS, global greenhouses, what next? There is nothing to



fear (it may seem) but the probabilities themselves. This obsession with the chances of danger, and with treatments for changing the odds, descends directly from the forgotten annals of nineteenth century information and control» (Hacking, 1990, pp. 5 – 6).

Drawing a general balance of the last two centuries, Hacking interprets the affirmation of probability as the story of a fourfold success: metaphysical (the ultimate reality of the universe explained no longer through Cartesian causation, but quantum mechanics), epistemological («we use evidence, analyze data, design experiments and assess credibility in terms of probabilities») (Hacking, 1990, p. 4), logical (we do not limit ourselves to deduction and mathematical axioms, but to statistical inference) and ethical. In particular on this latest success Hacking states:

«Probability cannot dictate values, but it now lies at the basis of all reasonable choice made by officials. No public decision, no risk analysis, no environmental impact, no military strategy can be conducted without decision theory couched in terms of probabilities. By covering opinion with a veneer of objectivity, we replace judgement by computation.» (Hacking, 1990, p. 4).

Deepening the epistemological question, Hacking makes us understand that a new type of scientific objectivity has been born, configured within probabilistic reason and developed through the statistical technique of gathering information. In *The Taming of Chance* Hacking deconstructs that form of objectivity through the concept of «reasoning style». Probabilistic reason is only one of the possible forms, «reasoning style» of science and its idea of objectivity.

Hacking's reasoning style category is one of the heuristic tools among those that have characterized the philosophy of knowledge of the 20th century in different research contexts, in particular, the French historical epistemology of Gaston Bachelard and Georges Canguilhem, the categories of «thinking style» of Ludwik Fleck, especially in *Genesis and development of a scientific fact* (1935), Thomas Khun's «paradigm», especially in *The structure of scientific revolutions* (1962), Michel Foucault's «episteme», especially in *The order of things*, published in 1966 (Sciortino, 2017, 2021).

For Hacking, reasoning styles concern cases or «significant singularities during which the coordinates of “scientific objectivity” are rearranged» (Hacking, 2002, p. 6). It is the reasoning style that allows propositions or theories to be candidates for truth or falsehood: «whether or not a proposition is as it were up for grabs, as a candidate for being true-or-false, depends on whether we have a way to reason about it» (Hacking, 2002, p. 160). Without the assumption of a style it would be meaningless to ask whether certain propositions are true or false, therefore they would not even emerge, they would not be «positive». Paracelsus' statement, for example, that mercury ointment cures syphilis as it is marked by the planet Mercury, can only be a candidate for truth or falsehood in Renaissance medical reasoning. Therefore styles establish «what it is to be objective (truths of certain

sorts are what we obtain by conducting certain sorts of investigations, answering to certain standards)» (Hacking, 2002, p. 181).

In *The Taming of Chance* Hacking reports the meaning and variety of reasoning styles that since the article *Language, Truth and Reason* he has never abandoned in subsequent publications (Fuller, 2004; Vagelli & Setaro, 2021). «Reasoning style» has been thought of in relation to the six different «scientific thinking styles» that the Oxford historian Alistair Crombie (1915–1996) identified in *Styles of scientific thinking in the European tradition* (1994), in particular from late medieval and modern age onwards: postulation style of reasoning (deductively defined objects based on presupposed properties, typical of mathematical sciences), experimental style of reasoning (induction, observation and measurement), modeling style of reasoning (defines its objects through analogies with objects of other theories), taxonomic style of reasoning (classification), statistical style of reasoning (objects defined by regularities and probabilities), genetic style of reasoning (temporal evolution) (Hacking, 1990).

According to Hacking, in the last four centuries, a seventh new style has also developed, the laboratory style, precisely from the combination of the experimental and the analogical (Hacking, 1992).

Furthermore, Hacking does not exclude the presence of further styles in the sciences and in knowledge (Hacking, 1996).

#### 4. The normal state

In *The Taming of Chance* statistical objectivity is related to the theme of the formation of human categories.

«Claim that enumeration requires categorization, and that defining new classes of people for the purposes of statistics has consequences for the ways in which we conceive of others and think of our own possibilities and potentialities» (Hacking, 1990, p. 6).

Hacking, influenced by Foucault, more precisely uses the expression «making up people» to indicate how science forms different subjects in the historical course, endowed with specific properties, within which individuals must think and act.

The field of «making up people» has been systematically studied by Hacking since 1982 and, without interruption, until the book *Historical Ontology* (2002). Among these works, as María Martínez (2014) claims, we should mention the article *Biopower and the avalanche of printed numbers* (1982) and the books *Rewriting the Soul* (1995), *Mad Travelers* (1998) and *The Social Construction of What?* (1999).

In *The Taming of Chance* Hacking highlights how statistical objectivity has generated the categories of «population», «social class» and «normality», incomprehensible in a non-numerical world. These categories are seen as useful tools for affirming new control practices employed in industrial societies. «Population», «social class» and «normality» are real columns for experiences and disciplines of social en-

gineering with the aim of normalizing undesirable individuals (like people who commit suicide, murderers, criminals, sick people) or communities (like foreigners). In order to do so, a «fundamental transition that links the erosion of determinism» and «the emergence of a new kind of indeterministic law, the taming of chance, and the displacement of human nature by the idea of normality» (Hacking, 1990, p. 179).

Hacking, therefore, traces a semantic genealogy of the word «normal», which assumed its current meaning between 1820 and 1830. In those years, in the medical and biological fields, we began to speak of a «normal state», as opposed to a «pathological state». François Joseph Victor Broussais (1772 – 1838), especially applied it to living organisms. The meaning, Hacking underlines, has been progressively transferred to many fields of human and natural activity (such as medicine, economics, social behaviors, biology, climate) in which statistical data filled the knowledge. In this story of affirmation of numerical reality, the law of probability was decisive in creating a new balance between “is” and “should be” in the use of the normal/pathological binomial, that is, in other words, to give great strength prescriptive to the meaning of the word «normal».

«People are normal if they conform to the central tendency of such laws, while those at the extremes are pathological. Few of us fancy being pathological, so ‘most of us’ try to make ourselves normal, which in turn affects what is normal.» (Hacking, 1990, p. 2)

In this way we moved from description to more advanced tools for intervening on people’s behavior.

«One can, then, use the word ‘normal’ to say how things are, but also to say how they ought to be. The magic of the word is that we can use it to do both things at once. The norm may be what is usual or typical, yet our most powerful ethical constraints are also called norms» (Hacking, 1990, p. 163).

We do not think enough about the prescriptive force that develops statistical knowledge and how this force implicitly pushes us to think towards a “normal state”.

«The normal stands indifferently for what is typical, the unenthusiastic objective average, but it also stands for what has been, good health, and for what shall be, our chosen destiny. That is why the benign and sterile-sounding word ‘normal’ has become one of the most powerful ideological tools of the twentieth century» (Hacking, 1990, p. 169).

The apparently absolute, indisputable and universal nature of numerical data contributes to the illusion of their “passivity” (in the sense that they appear to be part of pure description) and neutrality in a neo-positivistic way. Conversely, that evidence pushes the procedure, freed from the time of judgement, choice and responsibility, which are fundamental dimensions in the educational, ethical and political fields.

## 5. The reception of *The Taming of Chance* in educational research

*The Taming of Chance* is an important work within the international philosophical debate on scientific realism (Hacking, 2012; Sciortino, 2012; Vagelli & Sertaro, 2021). The book has also been considered an authoritative study in the teaching of statistics and mathematics in recent years (Batanero, 2015; Carranza & Alain Kuzniak, 2008). Above all by internationally renowned authors in the field of Anglo-Saxon theory and sociology of education in the Foucaultian tradition, in particular Thomas Popkewitz (2015, 2020) and Lynn Fendler (2006, 2008, 2009).

For Popkewitz, Hacking is a very important author for studying the modern and contemporary relationship between numbers and governance. For the American author, *The Taming of Chance* is one of the fundamental sources to show the affirmation of the numbers considered as an “actor”, «that produces things through processes that seem to be merely representing and describing» (Popkewitz, 2015, p. 151). In relation to the formation of the citizen, school is a fundamental place, numbers objectify the phenomena, apparently freeing discourses from personalities, subjectivities and ideologies and thus providing a technology of social control and planning of formidable utility to tame the uncertain democratic life (Popkewitz, 2015).

On the basis of *The Taming of Chance* Popkewitz highlights how statistical data create categories, and therefore differences, between people: for example, statistics abound in the categories of the «urban» subject or the «child at risk»; in this it develops a boundary between what is normal and what is pathological, promoting a type of education that inscribes exclusions (Popkewitz, 2018).

There are also numerous publications by Popkewitz (2011, 2016, 2020a), which draw on the statistical reasoning style concept of *The Taming of Chance* to criticize the underlying philosophy of the OECD’s Program for the International Student Assessment (PISA), which has a worldwide influence. The numbers of the international test fabricate principles about who the child is and how he should be: the categories, distinctions and magnitudes that build the statistics produce models of the types of people to be reached through education.

All previous themes (apparent impartiality of numbers, differentiating human categories, moral imperatives, critique of PISA) have been united and explored again in *The Impracticability of Practical Research* (2020b). In this study Popkewitz explores how the idea of practical and useful knowledge, which guided the modernization of schools, has been (re)visited in contemporary research on education reform. Also in this case *The Taming of Chance* is a fundamental reference to highlight the need to develop a history of the present, in particular to reflect on the statistical data within an analysis of the creation of people along the practices of inclusion and conservative practices.

Also for Lynn Fendler *The Taming of Chance* is a very important reference in several studies. In particular in *Why generalizability is not generalizable* (2006),

in the context of a critique of educational standards used by the US government, it tries to demonstrate that generalizability is a cultural product of modernity. In particular, *The Taming of Chance* cited Adolphe Quetelet who contributed to the formation of the concept of generalizability with his studies in the 1840s.

Also in the article *The history of the bell curve* (2008) Fendler refers to *The Taming of Chance* to show the use of the statistical tool of the bell curve in different social sectors, including education. Through testing and standardization trials the bell curve has been acting on assumptions about what we know and how we can study people in a society.

Finally, in the article *The upside of presentism* (2009) Fendler describes the phenomenon of the taming of chance as an ability to control change, as an ability to predict problems and contemporary educational solutions. Present thought and action, seemingly free and unlimited, are oriented and limited by statistical reason. *The Taming of Chance* illuminates this configuration and helps to re-evaluate the importance of historical research of the present.

## 6. The standardizing effect of EU Actions

EU documents express managerial and economic concerns about the uncertainty and upheaval caused by war and the subsequent displacement of millions of people:

«Those figures show that the Union is likely to be faced with a situation that is characterised by a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine who are unable to return to their country or region of origin because of Russian military aggression. The scale of the influx would likely be such that there is also a clear risk that the Member States' asylum systems will be unable to process the arrivals without adverse effects on their efficient operation and on the interests of the persons concerned and on those of other persons requesting protection» (EU, 2022a).

«[The pandemic has caused] serious negative effects on Member States' economies and societies. [...] The recent military aggression by the Russian Federation and the resulting migratory flows have exacerbated those effects and risk further undermining the recovery of the Union's economy.» (EU, 2022b).

However, thanks to the the same numerical insight, the disturbing factors are tamed. The invention of probability implies the possibility of control and intervention, above all in terms of costs and financial investments.

«In line with the possibility provided for in Regulation (EU) 2020/558, it is therefore necessary to provide for an exceptional extension of one of the measures introduced by that Regulation, namely the option of the application of a co-financing rate of 100 % for the accounting year 2020/2021 to the following accounting year» (EU, 2022b).

The numbers and the effect of being able to control the situation also includes the «access to education» (EU, 2023b, p.1). For example, at the beginning of the war, in March 2022, the first places available for refugees were planned.

«So far, based on the information reported by a few Member States in the context of the EU Migration Preparedness and Crisis Management Network, reception capacities, over and above the absorption capacity of the Ukrainian diaspora residing in the Union, exceed 310 000places» (EU, 2022°).

After a year since the beginning of the war, the data in the educational field showed that:

«EU Member States have made substantial efforts to rapidly include displaced children from Ukraine in their education systems, from early childhood education and care to higher education. Yet, at the beginning of the school year 2022/2023, only half a million Ukrainian children were enrolled in education systems across the EU. What's more, in localities where the number of displaced children is particularly large, reinforcement of basic infrastructure continues to be a necessity alongside the need for recruitment and training of teachers, trainers, and carers. Additional language and psychosocial support are proving critical and should be reinforced where not sufficiently available so as to sustain enrolment rates and address emerging challenges» (EU, 2023b, p. 11).

Among the nexts steps:

«The [European] Commission will work with Member States to scale up enrolment in schools by supporting regular exchanges on their progress, challenges, and good practices as part of the EU Education Solidarity Group for Ukraine. Outreach to the Ukrainian authorities will be intensified to encourage Ukrainian parents to send their children to school in the EU. The Commission will deliver half a million schoolbooks in Ukrainian language for fifth grade students under the new Ukrainian curriculum by spring 2023. Through its online platforms, the Commission will continue to support teachers and schools with online materials, good practices and training courses, with the specific emphasis on language teaching, psychosocial support and inclusive education» (EU, 2023b, pp. 12–13).

The statistical effort creates objectivity about Ukrainian refugees. For example, we are talking about: almost 4 million in total, 2 million minors, 2.6 million women (February 2023). As highlighted in section 2, the items are very numerous. We can add these other examples: the numbers of total temporary protection beneficiaries per thousand people (The Czech Republic 30.9, Estonia 27.8, Poland 25.9, Lithuania 24.2 and Bulgaria 22.5); gender and age («adult women made up almost half (47%); the majority aged between 35-64 of temporary protection beneficiaries in the EU. Children accounted for slightly more than one third (35%),



while adult men comprised less than a fifth (18%) of the total»); destination for unaccompanied minors (Eurostat, 2023°).

The refugee and the protected population are numbers, which make the subjects legible, controllable, predictable. By its nature, statistical reason leaves out history, life, and context. These dimensions are present in the publications that heavily populate research on Ukrainian refugee education. These studies cover a variety of topics. Even just within Italy, for example, the following can be highlighted: acceptance of the needy, rights (Agostinetto, 2022; Ius et. Al., 2022, Smeriglio, 2022), peace (Bartoli, 2022; Ricchiardi & Torre, 2022), personalization (Agostinetto, 2022; Ius et. Al., 2022), psychological support (Ricchiardi & Torre, 2022), the operator and educator (Salinaro & Tolmelli, 2022), linguistic and intercultural skills (Ricchiardi & Torre, 2022), meta-skills (Salinaro & Tolmelli, 2022).

There is no causal relationship between EU statistical work and educational research requirements. One cannot be said to be a mechanical consequence of the other. However, EU statistical practice has provided a definite picture of subjects that interferes with the theory and practice of education. The set of qualities that define the Ukrainian refugee is oriented towards (re)affirming a «normal state» through the needs: the «unaccompanied minors» (Eurostat 2023°; Eurostat, 2023d; EU, 2023°), the subjects with «language barrier» (EU, 2022c) or with «insufficient language skills» (EU, 2022d), the subjects with anxiety or, in general, subjects with the «necessary psychological support» (Eurostat, 2023d; EU, 2023°).

For these people, learning must produce protection and family qualities because «family tracing must be a priority» (EU, 2023°), it must guarantee L2 language skills, it must give psychological support.

CARE certainly presents references to the values of inclusion and protection through explicit reference to the rights established by international conventions, including the United Nations Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (EU, 2022b). However, the educational horizon is guided by the urgency of «reduction of harm» (Smeriglio, 2022, p. 197). For all the subjects that make up the Ukrainian refugee population, an aid system, «preparing standard operating procedures» (EU, 2023°) must be activated.

Thus the tragedy is removed and the Ukrainian is rehabilitated as a subject included in the order.

## 7. Conclusions

Based on the results of the analysis we place some reflections on the priority of planning and evidence developed by the EU educational policy for Ukrainian refugees.

Regarding the history of the cultural fortune of objectivity, *The Taming of Chance* highlights how statistical knowledge, which entered the nineteenth century as a practice of reading and orienting reality by state administrations and research, has been applied to the most diverse fields of knowledge and

practices. The case of the EU towards the Ukrainian emergency confirms the vitality of statistical practice, which, in the face of the shock and the irruption of chance, is still (or perhaps even more than in the past) a contemporary oracular voice to establish the truth and provide future predictions through indisputable evidence.

Reading *The Taming of Chance* helps to recognize in the objectivities developed by the EU on the Ukrainian population a type of neo-positivistic practice, whose primary objective is to suppress the fear of chaos due to the presence of millions of refugees. The EU education policy, therefore, moves in the trust that through those objectivities the unexpected and the otherness will be tamed, incessantly generated in history, in particular, in a tragic war form.

*The Taming of Chance* points out that statistical activity does not produce the only form of objectivity: other scientific styles can in fact guide the observation of subjects. The experimental style, for example, can build objectivity based on an encounter between young people of different origins and histories and can develop knowledge through their dialogues.

From a governance point of view, the EU strategy develops an administrative vision regarding the guiding principles of inclusive education. Linguistic, psychological, emotional and cultural assistance are the axes of this educational perspective which aims at the affirmation of a «normal state» in the lives of Ukrainian people and in the European home. Education thus conceived, dressed in the form of ideological neutrality and the procedural value of numbers, can only “work” for the good of society.

Hacking's insights into scientific objectivity, the style of probabilistic reasoning and the formation of human categories warn against this procedural mechanism that inferential reason has the power to activate in the educational experience. Indeed, the inclusion-assistance deprives the richness and complexity of the relationship and converts it into education of deficit. The immeasurable and transformative component, which develops in the encounter with existential, character, personal and cultural diversity, is channeled into a work of normalization. The possibility of mutual enrichment (Cambi, 2003; Catarci & Fiorucci, 2015; Gramigna, 2020) collide with the ethical imperative of rescue (to the maximum of mutual enrichment through rescue).

Regarding the question of the type of subjectification that develops EU action in aid of Ukrainian refugees, it can be stated that the resulting standardization effect has an impact both on the scientific-educational idea and on the formation of stereotyped subjectivities, imprisoned between the Western pupil and teacher, helper-saviors and the needy refugee (the «unaccompanied minors», «language barrier» or with «insufficient language skills», the subjects with anxiety or, in general, subjects with the «necessary psychological support»).

In a certain sense it can be said that in the question of the inclusion of Ukrainian children, reading *The Taming of Chance* pushes the attention away from the subjects to the educational world that we have created and in which we now live and try to include “others”. The general lesson that can be drawn from Hacking, as Thomas Popkewitz (2020) and Lynn

Fendler (2009) also suggest regarding the thought of the Canadian philosopher in relation to the benefits of the history of the present, is that of proposing a more nuanced vision for researchers, teachers, educators and managers towards the objectivity produced by international policy making. In addition to the contents, technologies and scientific styles that policies invoke, the epistemological examination operates critically on education and on the “creative” possibilities that can open up in relation to contemporary knowledge.

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