

Theory and Practice of the Welfare State in Europe

Session 01 and 02

Ryszard Szarfenberg Ph.D. Hab.

Institute of Social Policy

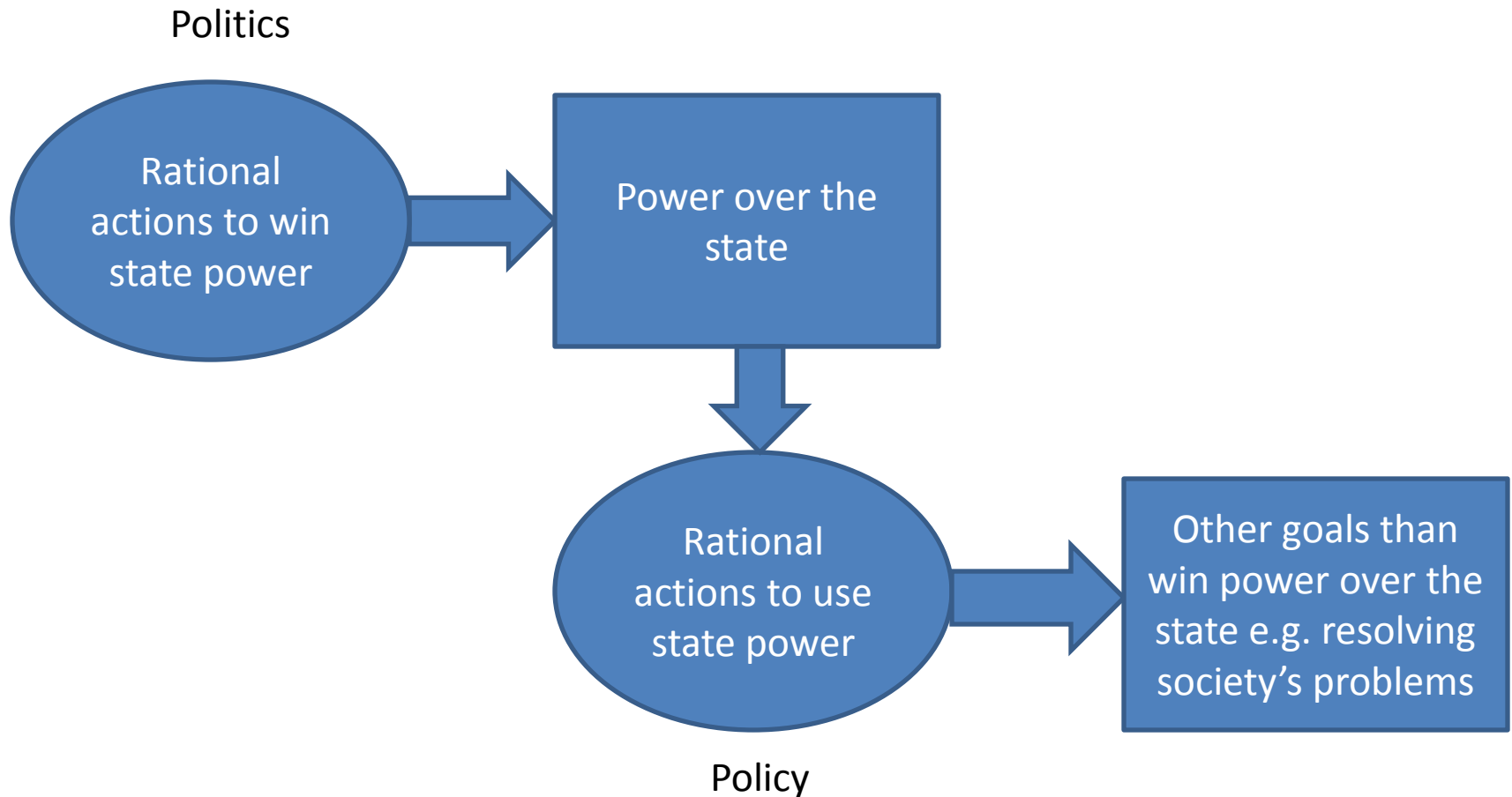
Course web page

www.ips.uw.edu.pl/rszarf/welfare-state/

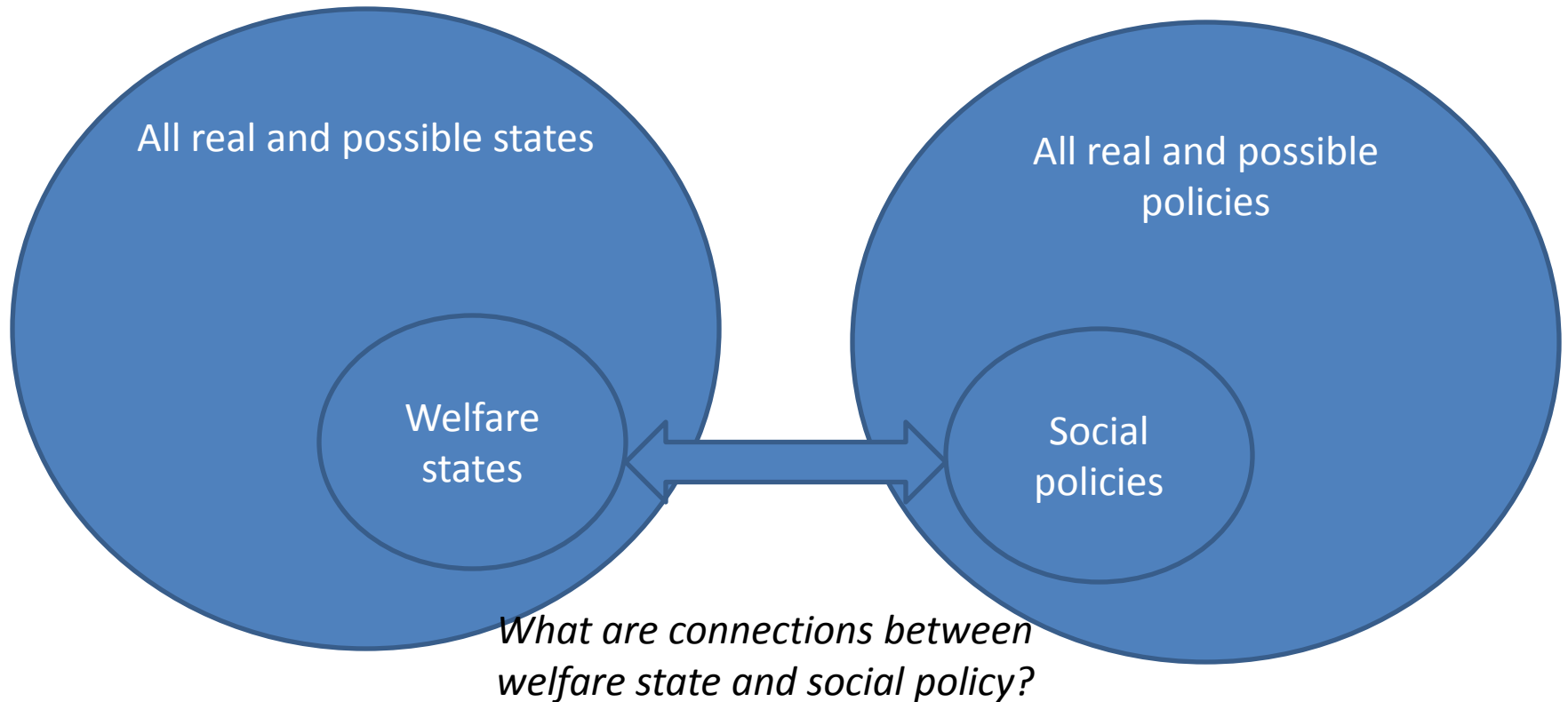
Polity, politics, policy

- Polity is a territorial and political organization of the residents-citizens (state is a synonymous polity)
- Politics is an activity which main aim is to win power over the polity or the state
- Policy is an activity which main instrument is power over the state, the government should use this power to What?

From politics to policy



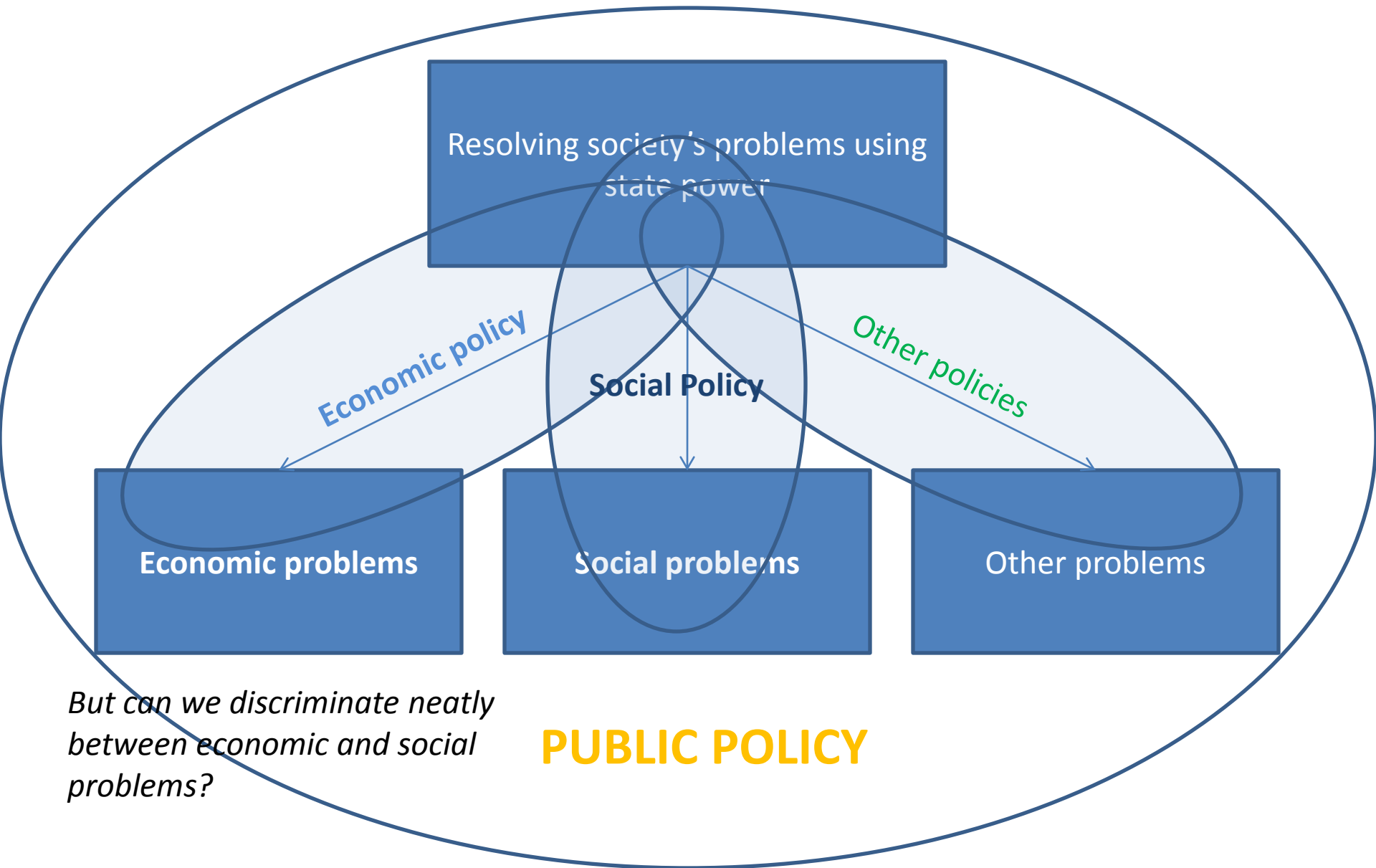
States and policies



What is distinct in welfare states in comparison with other non-welfare states?

What is distinct in social policies in comparison with other non-social policies?

Problems and solutions



Welfare state definitions - examples

- A welfare state is a state in which organized power is deliberately used (through politics and administration) in an effort to modify the play of market forces in at least three directions
 - by guaranteeing individuals and families a minimum income irrespective of the market value of their work or their property;
 - by narrowing the extent of insecurity by enabling individuals and families to meet certain 'social contingencies' (for example, sickness, old age and unemployment) which lead otherwise to individual and family crises;
 - by ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status or class are offered the best standards available in relation to a certain agreed range of social services

A. Briggs, *The Welfare State in Historical Perspective*, 1967

Welfare State definitions - examples

- In a narrow sense, the welfare state may refer to state measures for the provision of key welfare services (often confined to health, education, housing, income maintenance and personal social services).
- Increasingly broadly, the welfare state is also taken to define
 - a particular form of state,
 - a distinctive form of polity or
 - a specific type of society.
- ...the welfare state under capitalism is generally understood in this third sense as defining a society in which the state intervenes within the processes of economic reproduction and distribution to reallocate life chances between individuals and/or classes.

Social policy definitions - examples

- 'Social policy' is not a technical term with an exact meaning. ...it is taken to refer to the policy of governments with regard to action having a direct impact on the welfare of the citizens, by providing them with services or income.
- The central core consists, therefore, of social insurance, public (or national) assistance, the health and welfare services, and housing policy. Education obviously belongs... So also is the treatment of crime...

Social policy definitions - examples

- Social policy is best conceived as a kind of blueprint for the management of society towards social ends: it can be defined as the underlying as well as the professed rationale by which social institutions and groups are used or brought into being to ensure social preservation or development
- Social policy is, in other words, the institutionalized control of services, agencies and organizations to maintain or change social structure and values. Sometimes this control may be utterly conscious, and consciously expressed by Government spokesmen and others. Sometimes it may be unspoken and even unrecognized

Perspectives of thinking about social policy

- Two perspectives mentioned by Titmuss
 - Normative: „**Are we concerned with principles and objectives about certain areas of social life and organisation?**”
 - Instrumental: or „**with methods and techniques of action, management, organisation and the application of games theory?**”
- We can define social policy in terms of principles and objectives (e.g. social justice, social solidarity, freedom, eradication of poverty) and/or methods and techniques (e.g. economic policy, redistributive policy)

Normativity problem

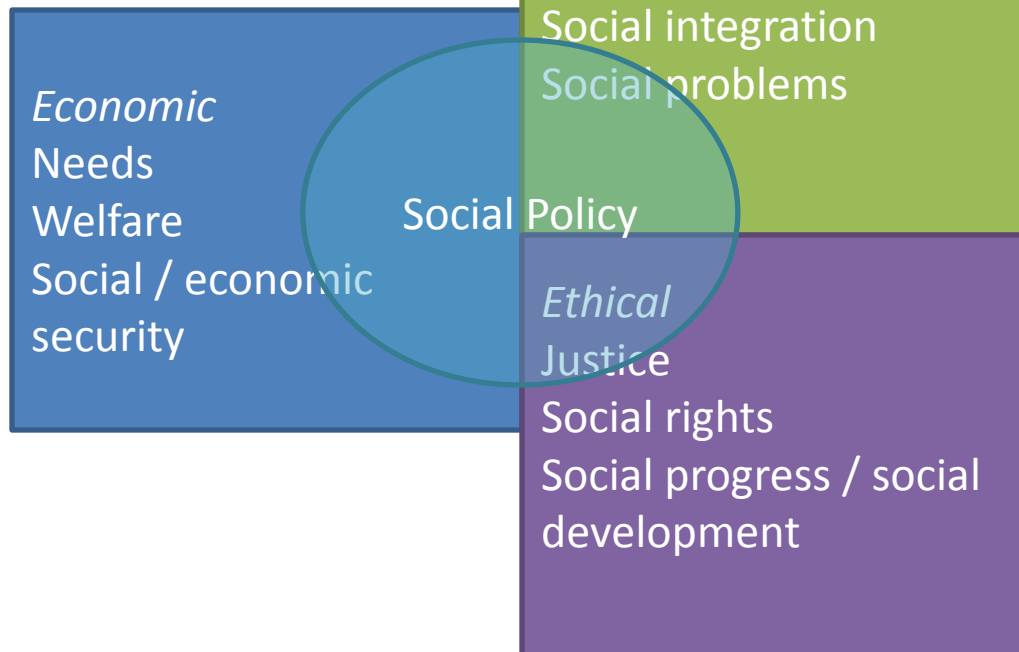
- Is social policy inherently beneficial for the poor or socially excluded?
- Examples of non-beneficial social policies
 - Soviet Union social policy
 - Nazi Germany social policy
 - South Africa social policy in the time of apartheid system
 - Third world corrupted states social policies with distribution of resources from the poor to the rich
 - Social policies of colonial powers in the colonies
 - Patriarchal social policies
- Social policies vs antisocial policies
- **What is 'welfare' for some groups may be 'illfare' for others**

Two types of definitions (Titmuss)

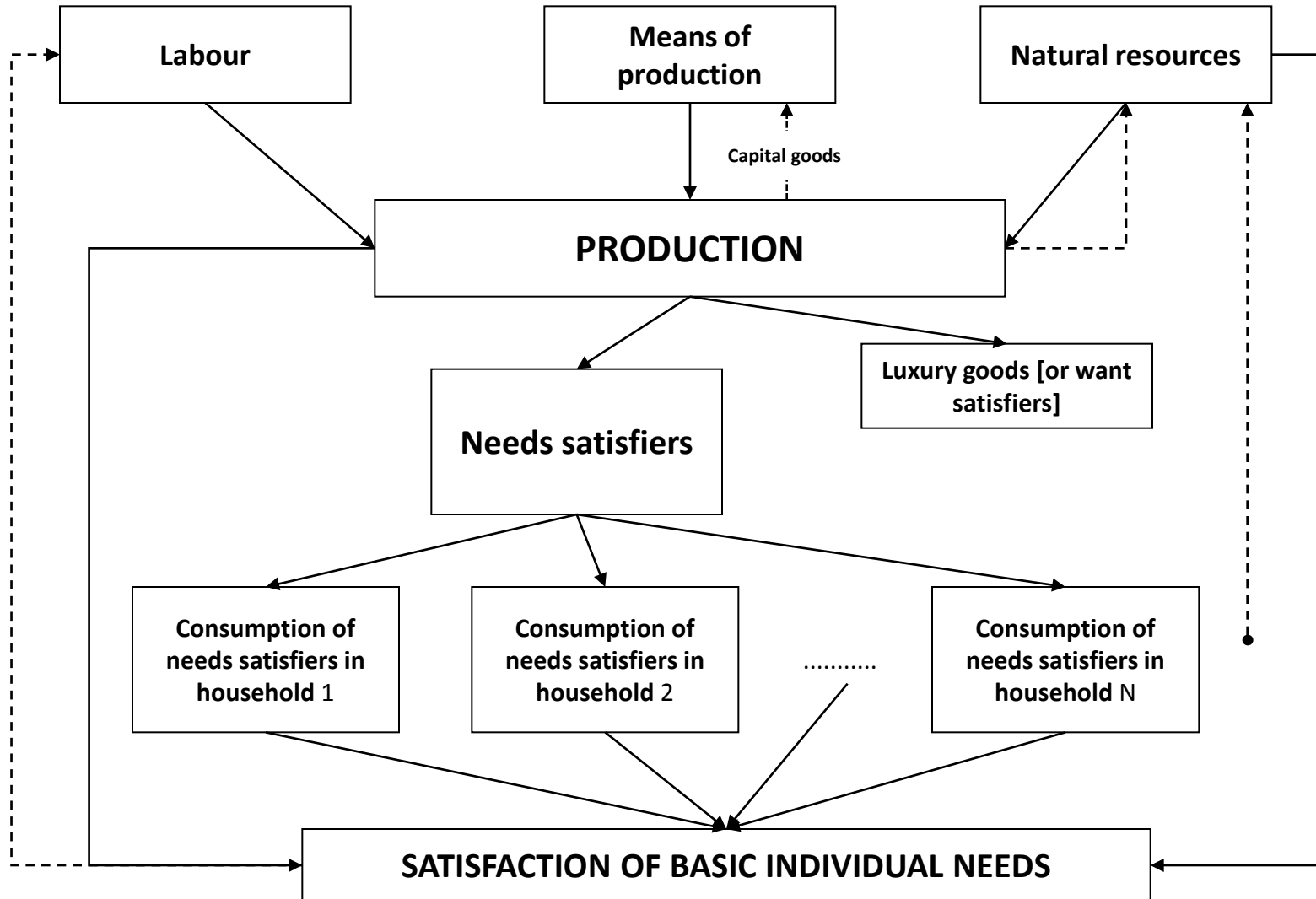
- Social policy as an instrument to promote altruism vs egoism in society
- Social policy as instruments of ensuring for everyone minimum standards and opportunities
 - aim to be beneficent - policy is directed to provide welfare for citizens
 - they include economic as well as non-economic objectives; for example, minimum wages, minimum standards of income maintenance and so on.
 - they involve some measure of progressive redistribution in command-over-resources from rich to poor

Nine core and general concepts in social policy definitions

Three continents on
social policy conceptual
map



A model of material production



Theory of human need

