

Public assistance and veteran-military net benefits are progressive throughout the welfare scale; government-railroad net benefits, whether adjusted or unadjusted, and the unadjusted private pension net benefit are progressive except at the very top of the scale; the adjusted private pension net benefit and the adjusted or unadjusted social security net benefit are progressive over the lower part of the scale, proportional over most of the upper part, and regressive at the very top.

TABLE 6.—RATIO OF ADJUSTED NET BENEFIT FOR EACH WELFARE RATIO INTERVAL TO BENEFIT FOR ALL WELFARE RATIO INTERVALS, BY PROGRAM, 1960-61 AVERAGES

Welfare ratio interval	Public assistance	Veterans and military programs	Social security	Government civilian, and railroad pensions	Private pensions	Combined programs
All families:						
Negative.....	0.006	0.005	0.009	0.023	0.001	0.009
Under 0.50.....	.794	.351	.477	.545	.118	.478
Under 0.75.....	.829	.429	.565	.634	.192	.556
Under 1.00.....	.844	.470	.594	.654	.249	.586
Under 1.50.....	.775	.537	.545	.611	.250	.561
Under 2.00.....	.634	.527	.410	.510	.101	.452
Under 2.50.....	.507	.444	.282	.390	.032	.343
Under 3.50.....	.323	.336	.132	.181	-.150	.182
Total.....	.001	.001	0	.001	-.003	.001

Ranking adjusted net benefits over the lower half of the welfare scale produces the following most-to-least progressive pattern: (1) public assistance, (2) government-railroad, (3) social security, (4) veteran-military, and (5) private pension. The following order developed when these net benefits are ranked over the upper half of the scale: (1) public assistance, (2) veteran-military, (3) government-railroad, (4) social security, and (5) private pension. Clearly, the public assistance net benefit is the most progressive and the private pension net benefit is the least progressive of these five net benefits.

When the nonaged are considered separately, the net benefits for public assistance and veteran-military programs are progressive throughout the welfare scale; the unadjusted or adjusted social security net benefits are progressive over the bottom part of the scale, roughly proportional over most of the upper part, and regressive at the very top; the private pension net benefit is progressive over most of the scale before adjustment and afterward is progressive over the lower part, roughly proportional over most of the upper part, and regressive at the very top; the government-railroad net benefit, before and after adjustment, is progressive over the lower part of the scale and roughly proportional over the upper part.

For the aged (unadjusted or adjusted) social security and veteran-military net benefits are progressive throughout the welfare scale; the (unadjusted or adjusted) private pension net benefit is irregular over the lower part of the scale, progressive in the middle part, and irregular in the upper; the public assistance net benefit is progressive in the lower part of the scale, proportional over most of the upper part, and progressive at the top; and the government-railroad net benefit is progressive in the lower part of the scale, proportional in the middle part, progressive over most of the upper part, and regressive at the very top.