WEB SCRAPING IN GERMAN PRICE STATISTICS
Dorothee Blang, Federal Statistical Office of Germany

Aims of the feasibility study
- Is it possible to automate price surveys via internet by imitation of manual collection?
- Is this an efficient survey method?
- What are the advantages / disadvantages?

IT-infrastructure and applied tools

iMacros – recording scripts, form filling

iMacros – code example for flights

MySQL Database: Input Data for iMakros Data extraction

MySQL database: Output Data

Results
- Yes, for a lot of products it’s a feasible solution
- It’s efficient and can help to increase number of price observations
- Development requires profound programming skills
- Website changes occur irregularly, thus
  - Service has to be available at any time
  - Work load for service cannot be predicted

Conclusions
- Implementation in daily production is intended
- Allocation of stuff resources for support is an essential precondition