

Rolling and Galinski visit Japan

European access to information via MT

Loll Rolling, head of information transfer between languages for the Commission of the European Communities, and Christian Galinski, an expert on Japanese terminology at INFOTERM, Vienna, visited Japan between October 1 and 14 to lay the bases for a collaborative project which will make Japanese technical and scientific information available to interested parties in Europe.

They saw 85 persons in 35 different locations during their visit, and found the Japanese enthusiastic about the project. An office in Europe will look at the information needed, by creating information "profiles" from requirements specified by would-be users, and an office in Japan will look out for such information. The idea is not to gather information and translate it indiscriminately, but to work to specific parameters, according to what is needed. The information would then be translated by a machine translation system in Japan, which has yet to be chosen. The scheme will be fully collaborative between the European Communities and the Japanese authorities, with the latter monitoring its progress.

The next stage will be a comparative evaluation of the efficiency of the various MT systems. The Japanese companies have to submit samples by the end of November and it is hoped a decision can be reached by the end of the year.

The sort of volume of information provision being contemplated is on the lines of 500 abstracts a month, rising by something like tenfold by the end of the second year of operation. Those receiving abstracts of information, who find a subject of interest, will be able to request a translation in full of the document concerned. The sort of scientific-technical information being sought could include internal reports, conference papers, research papers and new patent applications.