

How the European DX Council was born

by Anker Petersen, Denmark



Anker Petersen giving this lecture in Tampere. Foto by Kaj Bredahl Jørgensen.

Introduction

Thank you to Suomen DX-liitto ry, The Finnish DX Association for the invitation. It is the sixth time, I attend an EDXC Conference in Finland, so I look forward to this arrangement. My congratulations today go to FINLAND, which now has been an independent Nation for 100 years.

I also congratulate our host - Tampereen DX-Kuuntelijat, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. I was here in 1992, when you organized an EDXC Conference the first time. Finally I also congratulate The European DX Council with its 50th anniversary.

The European DX Council was founded in my house in Skovlunde, Denmark, on the 4th of June, 1967 – a little more than 50 years ago today.

Until then, the DX-Clubs in Europe had been mostly national and publishing their DX-bulletins in the national languages. There was a lot to hear from abroad both on shortwave and mediumwave. But during “The Cold War” a lot of shortwave frequencies in Europe were heavily jammed.

In 1966 there existed 116 DX-Clubs, according to the World Radio TV Handbook 1966. It is remarkable, that nearly half of these, - or 54 -, were located in Sweden!

Once a year the Swedish DX-Federation (Riksförbundet DX-Alliansen) arranges their DX-Parliament, a meeting where all Swedish DX leaders gather. During the early 1960'ies the DX-Parliament has further been a place, where the Scandinavian DX-ers and later DX-ers from other European countries have met to discuss DX-matters of common interest. In 1965 several European DX-ers felt, that a closer co-operation between the DX-leaders in European Countries would be appropriate and useful.

Danmarks Kortbølge Klub or the Danish Shortwave Club published its bulletin “Shortwave News” in Danish from 1957. But already in 1959 the Board decided to publish SWN in two versions each month – one in Danish and one in English! Then the international membership increased considerably, and the Danish Shortwave Club International quickly became the most global DX-Club in the world. Thus in April 1966 it had 57 members in Denmark and Greenland, but 76 members abroad living in 18 different countries in five continents.

Invitation

Ellmann Ellingsen of the Norwegian DX-Listeners Club then got the idea of establishing a supra-national DX-organisation for this purpose – strongly inspired by the Council of Europe. Thus in April 1966 the DX-Listeners Club sent out an Invitation to DX-organisations in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Let me give a summary of its text: The European DX Council should consist of one representative from each membercountry, as in the Council of Europe. The tasks could be:

- to act as a Decisive Assembly, if a conflict comes up and the parties concerned wishes so,
- to co-ordinate important matters within the European DX-ing,
- to improve the contact between the DX-ers and the radiostations, and
- to stay in close contact with other DX-organisations in the world.

The Council work should be limited to Broadcasting- and PTP- DX-ing. The Amateur-organisations should take care of the HAM DX-ing.

This invitation gave positive reactions from DX-Clubs in Benelux, Denmark, Finland, France, Sweden and the United Kingdom. From the U.K. the Pathfinder Radio Group was positive, whereas the International SW Club and the International SW League were against! Also individual DX-ers in Austria, Germany, Ireland and Portugal showed interest.

With these results, the DX-Listeners Club in May 1966 proposed that the positive Clubs appointed an experienced DX-er to become a member in a Preliminary Committee.

At the following DX-Parliament in Skövde in Sweden, this idea was further discussed in an international forum lead by Claës-W. Englund on the 12th of June.

Preliminary Committee

The Preliminary Committee was established the 3rd of September 1966 with Ellmann Ellingsen as Executive Secretary and these four other members from Denmark (Anker Petersen, DSWCI), Finland (Eric Gagneur, Finlands DX-Club r.f.), the Netherlands (Maarten van Delft, Benelux DX-Club) and Sweden (Björn Fjaestad, DX-Alliansen).

We worked hard during the following months. Ellmann Ellingsen established three subcommittees to look closer at the financial possibilities, the tasks of the EDXC and the constitution. English was a foreign language to all of us, so we sent the Draft Statutes of the EDXC to the British Representative of the DSWCI, John B. Ambler in Birmingham, for language correction. In April 1967 we could present our Final Report to the DX-organisations in Europe.

In the meantime German DX-ers on the 14th of January 1967 had founded the ADDX or “Association Deutschsprachiger DX-er und DX-Clubs” with Heinrich Kobsch as Chairman and Treasurer.

EDXC Foundation

The Preliminary Committee decided to hold the EDXC Foundation Conference on the 3rd to 4th of June 1967 in my house near Copenhagen, because Denmark was the country in the middle of the participants.

The following took part in the Foundation of the EDXC:

Denmark	Anker Petersen, Skovlunde	DSWCI (Chairman)
	Kaj Bredahl Jørgensen, Greve	DSWCI (Board member)
Finland	Tor-Henrik Eklblom, Copenhagen	Finlands DX Club/SDXX

Germany (F.R.)	Heinrich Kobsch, Köln	ADDX (Chairman)
Netherlands	Maarten van Delft, Zeist	BDXC (Chairman)
	Bob Grevenstuk, Amsterdam	BDXC (Board member)
	Wouter Franken, Amsterdam	BDXC (Editor)
Norway	Ellmann Ellingsen, Oslo	DX-Listeners Club (Editor)
Sweden	Göran Svensson, Halmstad	DX-Alliansen (Chairman)
	Claës-W. Englund, Enebyberg	DX-Alliansen (Member)

I am happy, that two other participants are present here in Tampere today, Kaj Bredahl Jørgensen and Torre Ekblom, who at that time was Station Manager of Finnair in Copenhagen.

I have three photos from that conference.

On the first you see our Chairman of the meeting, Kaj Bredahl Jørgensen (right), and me from Denmark.



On the next you see Torre Ekblom from Finland and behind him Bob Grevenstuk from the Netherlands.



On the third you see some of the group on my terrace. They are from the left: Ellmann Ellingsen, Kaj Bredahl Jørgensen, Heinrich Kobsch, Göran Svensson and myself.



Today 50 years later, some of these unfortunately have passed away: Wouter Franken, Ellmann Ellingsen, Claës-W. Englund and Heinrich Kobsch.

I remember, how everyone sat around the table in my living room with his English dictionary in order to use the correct expressions. The negotiations lasted a total of 8 hours and were very successful. We agreed in the tasks and in a revised Statute.

Then on the 4th of June 1967 at 1400 hours, Ellmann Ellingsen could declare the European DX Council as established with 4 Working Committees.

The 2-page Statute had a preamble and 16 Articles. I will just mention the Articles with a major new content:

Article 1 states the name and that its Headquarters and mailing address are that of the Secretary-General.

Article 6 says that the members of the Council are European countries. The DX-organisations of these countries choose their representative to the Council.

This was already changed in October 1969 from country-membership to club-membership.

Article 7 says that a radiostation or a political organisation must not have a major influence in the DX-organisations choosing a representative to the Council.

Article 13 A: The country representative is elected for a duration of one year, after which he may stand for re-election.

Article 13 B: The Working Committees shall normally consist of one or more of the Council representatives, but individual DX-ers can be invited to be consultative members.

Article 13 C: One of the representatives of the Council shall be elected Secretary-General for one year, after which he may stand for re-election. He has no voting rights. The country, from where he comes, shall appoint another representative.

Article 14: The recommendations voted on shall have a majority of 2/3 of the total votes.

Article 15: A joint fund shall be administered by the Secretary-General. The annual contribution to be determined by the Council.

Nothing was said in 1967 about EDXC Conferences! At that time all contacts between the members had to be done by letters, because e-mail was not yet invented.

Claës-W. Englund was willing to be Secretary General. But he was going to move from Stockholm to Uddevalla for a new job, so he could first be active from the 1st of October 1967. Thus I agreed in acting as Provisional Secretary-General until October.

Four Working Committees were established at this Founding Conference:

- Reception Report Committee (Anker Petersen chairman)
- Landlist Committee (Torbjörn Einarsson chairman)
- Contest Committee (Wouter Franken chairman)
- Information Committee (Ellmann Ellingsen chairman, later Torre Ekblom).

The first year of EDXC

During the following months these chairmen had to organize their work and get DX-ers from five other countries involved in this. In the meantime, Switzerland had joined the EDXC. I will come back to the Reception Report Committee in a moment.

But the participants of the Founding Conference also had to translate the EDXC Statute to their own languages and distribute it to the local DX-Clubs. After that they had to find the country member to the Council.

I had a painless transfer of the job as Secretary General to Claës-W. Englund in October 1967.

Second EDXC Conference

The Second EDXC Conference also took place in my home in Skovlunde on the 1st and 2nd of June 1968.

The 13 participants were:

Denmark	Anker Petersen, Skovlunde	DSWCI (Chairman)
	Ivan Stensgaard, Maarslet	Cimbrer DX Club (Chairman)
Finland	Torre Ekblom, Copenhagen	Finlands DX Club/SDXX
Germany (F.R.)	Heinrich Kobsch, Köln	ADDX (Chairman)
	Helmut Sahm, Im Steinhof	ADDX (Member)
Netherlands	Wouter Franken, Amsterdam	Benelux DX-Club (Editor)
Norway	Ellmann Ellingsen, Oslo	DX-Listeners Club (Editor)
	Tore Nilsen, Hamar	DX-Listeners Club (Member)
Sweden	Claës-W. Englund, Uddevalla	<u>EDXC Secretary General</u>
	Göran Svensson, Halmstad	DX-Alliansen (Chairman)
	Torbjörn Einarsson	DX-Alliansen (Member)

Most of the participants from the Founding Conference in 1967 took part again.

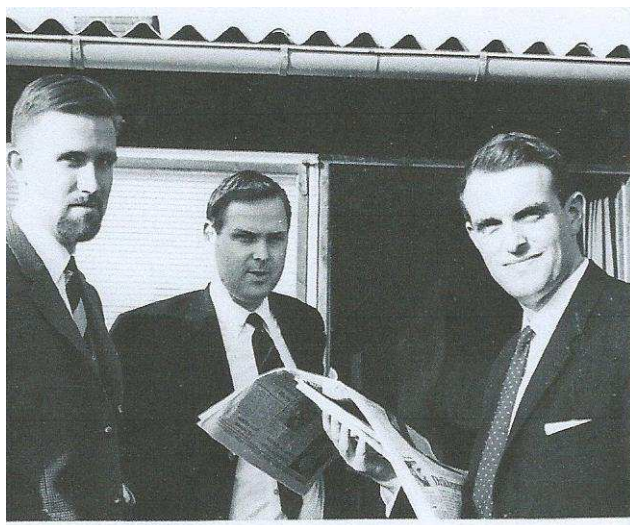
Fortunately some more DX-ers and two broadcasters also showed up: Assjah Riewesel came from the Swedish Section of Deutschlandfunk and Christian Flagstad, Producer of the DX-Window in Radio Denmark Shortwave. Here is a Group Photo of most of the participants on my terrace.



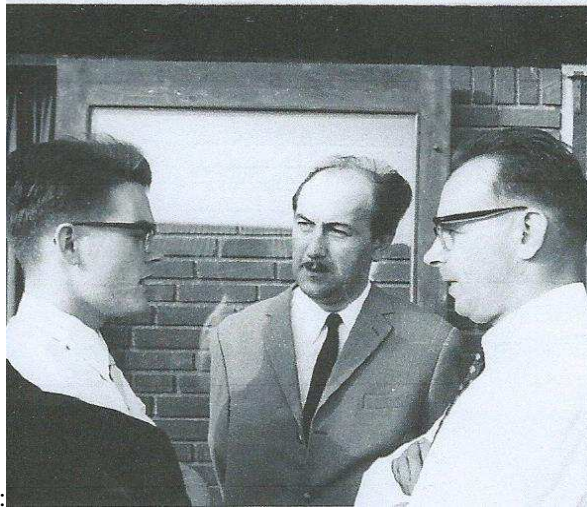
From left: Ellmann Ellingsen, Claës-W. Englund, Göran Svensson, Anker Petersen, Tore Nilsen, Assjah Riewesel, Wouter Franken, Torbjörn Einarsson, Heinrich Kobsch, Helmut Sahm, Ivan Stensgaard and Torre Ekblom.

Tore Nilsen from Norway a short time ago sent me these three photos, which show:

From the right: Ellmann Ellingsen, Claës-W. Englund and Göran Svensson:



From the left: Wouter Franken, Heinrich Kobsch and Helmut



Sahm:

From the left: Torre Ekblom, Claës-W. Englund, Anker Petersen and Christian Flagstad at lunch on my terrace.



At this Conference we heard the Reports about the EDXC work during the past year from the Secretary General and from the Chairmen of all 4 Working Committees. All were re-elected for another year.

Claës-W. Englund stated, that the past year had proved to be very useful for the co-operation between like-minded DX-ers in the European countries, as well as between the EDXC and ANARC in North America.

In November 1968 Claës-W. Englund sent out a Newsletter showing the six actual country representatives in the EDXC: Bent Nielsen (Denmark), Helmut Sahm (Germany), Jim Vastenhoud (Netherlands), Tore Nilsen (Norway), Björn Fjaestad (Sweden) and Carl Bretano (Switzerland). Finland's DX-Club had observer status. Furthermore each of the 4 Working Committees had members from all six countries.

Reception Report Committee

I will go in more detail about the work in the Reception Report Committee, because I was the Chairman of that, as you can see here:

Anker Petersen, DENMARK (Chairman)

Hans Burmeister, later replaced by Horst Boer, GERMANY (Fed. Rep.)

Ben Loog, the NETHERLANDS

Øivind Stenberg, NORWAY

Björn Fransson, SWEDEN

Kurt Hilfiker, SWITZERLAND.

It was active from April 1968 till April 1972. Its main task was to state the common demands to a listener's reception report from information given by radio stations.

The Committee began its task by studying most of the existing reception report formulas published by DX-Clubs and radiostations, in order to list all the various items of information, they contain. The result of this survey was that no less than 108 different items could be found on these reception report formulas.

Questionnaire to radiostations

Since they cannot all be mentioned on a normal-size reception report formula, the Reception Report Committee in November 1968 asked 38 international radiostations and 16 home service stations in a questionnaire, which of these 108 items, they consider most useful in reception reports.

The response particularly from the international radiostations was overwhelming. Unfortunately most of these stations no longer exist on shortwave today!

I will mention all the stations with a Foreign Service, which responded:

R Nederland,

Kol Israel

Deutsche Welle

Radio Sweden

BBC

Radio New York Worldwide

Radio Australia

Swiss Broadcasting Corporation

HCJB, Ecuador with two different responses

Radio Tashkent

Deutschlandfunk

Radio Denmark

New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation

Radio Prague

Radio Finland

Radio Canada

Polskie Radio

South African Broadcasting Corporation

Radio Japan

Radio Voice of the Gospel, Ethiopia and

Radio Portugal.

Radio 4VEH in Haiti was the only Home Service station, which answered.

Analysis of the replies

The Reception Report Committee then had a huge task to analyse the replies from the 23 stations of the 108 questions. The stations could answer each of these questions either by an A = Required, a B = Preferred or a C = Can be omitted.

It will be too much today to go through all 108 items in the Questionnaire, which fills 5 pages. Instead we will have a look on 4 questions number 54-57, about how the reception quality should be described, here marked with yellow. The DX-er can choose between SINPO, SINFO, just SIO or the Q-codes like QSA, QRM and so on.

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D. RECEPTION (Mainly for the Technical Staff)

49. _____ The report covers one day only .

50. _____ The report covers more days .

51. _____ The report covers one frequency only .

52. _____ The report covers other simultaneous frequencies .

53. _____ The reception is described several times during the listening period .

54. _____ Technical description preferred in SINPO .

55. _____ Technical description preferred in SINFO .

56. _____ Technical description preferred in SIO .

57. _____ Technical description preferred in Q-code.

58. _____ Full explanation of the SINPO-code printed on the formula .

59. _____ The signal strength shown graphical on a panoramic diagram on formula .

60. _____ Interference from lower frequency : Type / name of station.
_____ QSA of this station .
_____ Exact frequency of this station .

61. _____ Interference on the same frequency: Type / name of station.
_____ QSA of this station .

62. _____ Interference from higher frequency: Type / name of station.
_____ QSA of this station .
_____ Exact frequency of this station .

Here is the response from Peter Homfray, Director of Radio Australia and editor of the Sunday programme "DX-ers Calling". I put his photo at the bottom of the page.

He answered question 54 with a "B", meaning that he preferred SINPO. Question 55-57 got "C" meaning they can be omitted.

D. RECEPTION (Mainly for the Technical Staff)

49. C The report covers one day only .
50. B The report covers more days .
51. C The report covers one frequency only .
52. B The report covers other simultaneous fr
53. B The reception is described several time
54. B Technical description preferred in SIN
55. C Technical description preferred in SIN
56. C Technical description preferred in SIO
57. C Technical description preferred in Q-c
58. B Full explanation of the SINPO-code pri
59. C The signal strength shown graphical on
60. B Interference from lower frequency : Ty
- B QS
- B Ex
61. B Interference on the same frequency: Ty
- B QS
62. B Interference from higher frequency: Ty
- B QS
- B Ex
63. B The atmospheric noise derives from loc
64. B The atmospheric noise derives from ger
65. B The fading described after this code:

NIL = No fading
F = Slight fadi
FF = Some fading
FFF = Fade-out
S = Slow fading
SS = Very slow
SSS = No fading

Other responses came from Radio Tashkent in Uzbekistan. Here got question 54 an "A" meaning "SINPO is required" and the other 3 C's. Deutschlandfunk agreed completely with Radio Tashkent.

The only Domestic Station 4VEH in Haiti answered B = Preferred to SINPO and had no answer to the 3 others possibilities.



3rd EDXC Conference in Halmstad

The third EDXC Conference was held in Halmstad, Sweden, on the 13-15 of June, 1969, combined with the annual DX-Parliament. Its participation was fantastic: 167 persons, of which 129 were Swedes and 38 coming from 14 other countries!

As Chairman of the EDXC Reception Report Committee I could report some of these results of the analysis to the big audience.

Furthermore I was asked to lead an International Panel of 9 Broadcasters, which are shown here. As you can see, there were important persons amongst these:

Arthur Cushen, Radio New Zealand

Sonja Persson, HCJB, Ecuador

Harry van Gelder, Radio Nederland

Eric Gagneur, Radio Finland

Christian Flagstad, Radio Denmark

Herbert Kuhnle, Austrian Radio

Arne Skoog, Radio Sweden

Bengt Järrel, Radio Sweden

Jan Nyström, Radio Sweden

This Panel willingly answered our questions, about how they handle Reception Reports.

Final reports

In April 1972 the Reception Report Committee sent out the complete analysis to member DX-Clubs and to radiostations, who had responded to the Questionnaire.

Here is the start of the Reception part of the complete analysis. It is a bit complicated! At the top you can see all the 23 radiostations names written downwards. Their reply can be found below at each question. To the right are the totals of "A", "B" and "C". As an example, most stations replied Question

2. The majority, namely 13 stations, answered "C". Thus the conclusion is "C" for Question 2. So they do not want reception reports written on a post card!

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRES BY 22 FOREIGN SERVICE STATIONS

a = Required b = Preferred c = Can be omitted - = No answer

Q	B	C	A	N	S	P	S	P	K	N	R	D	H	H	R	D	P	D	T	F	R	R	4	Total	Result	
u	B	B	B	H	B	o	w	r	o	e	S	W	C	C	N	e	o	L	a	i	N	V	V			
e	C	C	C	K	C	r	e	a	l	d	A	J	J	Y	n	l	F	s	n	Z	O	E		a	b	c
s						t	d	g	e		B	B	W	m	a		h	l		G	H					
t						u	e	u	Z	r					a	n		k	a							
i						g	n	e	i	l		S	E		r	d		e	n							
o						a		o	a		c	n		k		n	d									
n						l		n	n		a	g				t										

A. REPORT FORMULA IN GENERAL

1. Report formula is printed on paper of standard size "A-4" (like this)	- - c c b a - - - b b a b c b b b b a a b b b	4	11	3	b
2. Report formula is printed on a report card (postcard size)	b c b c b c a - a - c c b c b c - c c c c c c	2	5	13	c
3. Taped reports are accepted regularly	- c b b c c - - c - c c c c b c b c c c b b b	0	7	12	c
4. Taped reports are only accepted on special occasions	b b c c b c a - b b b a b - c b - a b b c c c	3	10	7	b

Then we look at questions 54-57. Question 54 required SINPO to be used. Questions 55 (SINFO) and 57 (the Q-codes) could be omitted. Question 56 (the SIO) was preferred by 7 stations.

54. Technical report preferred in SINPO	- - b a b a a - a - c c a - c a a a a c c b b	9	4	5	a
55. Technical report preferred in SINFO	- b c a a a - - - - b a - - c a - c c b c c -	3	3	8	c
56. Technical report preferred in SIO	b b c a a c - b - b b c - a c b - c c a b c -	4	7	7	bc
57. Technical description preferred in Q-code	- - c b c c - - - c c c c - c b - c c c c c -	0	2	13	c

In 1972 the Reception Report Committee also published the EDXC Reporting Guide, which had 20 pages. It contained the recommendations from the stations on how to write a report, which is useful to the radio stations. There were report formulas in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese.

Closing

That was my lecture about "How the EDXC was born". I will close with two recent photos commemorating the birthplace.

The first is from a visit to my house after the EDXC Conference in Lyngby, Copenhagen in 1999, when Risto Vähäkainu was Secretary General. Risto is seen as number two from the right together with several Finnish DX-ers. Most to the left is one of the founders, Torre Ekblom. Number four from the

left is former Secretary General Tibor Szilagyi, who also is here in Tampere today. In the middle in the background with glasses is former Italian Secretary General Luigi Cobisi.



The other photo is from May 2014, when the present Secretary General Kari Kivekäs visited my home. On the picture is also Kaj Bredahl Jørgensen, who chaired the founding meeting around the same table, now 50 years ago.

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Let me close by asking Kari Kivekäs to come up here and get some of the documents from the start of the European DX Council.

This photo taken by Kaj Bredahl Jørgensen shows me presenting the first EDXC documents to Kari Kivekäs:



Finally three of the founders of the EDXC eating lunch at the Varala Sports Institute in Tampere: Torre Ekblom, Kaj Bredahl Jørgensen and Anker Petersen. Photo by Risto Vähäkainu.

