

University of Groningen

## Bacterial fingerprints across Europe

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# STELLINGEN

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## 'Bacterial fingerprints across Europe'

1. Bacterial criminals, such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and carbapenemase-producing *Enterobacteriaceae*, impose a major threat to human health worldwide. The description of their genetic diversity and understanding of their epidemiology will help to improve infection prevention strategies to avoid transmission events and outbreaks. (*This thesis*)
2. As every human being has its unique fingerprint, every bacterium of each species has its unique fingerprint as well. Accordingly, the number of bacterial fingerprints on this earth is infinite. (*This thesis*)
3. Working solely with 'domesticated' lab strains neglects the diversity of nature and limits the results and outcome of any experiment. (*This thesis*)
4. The diverse applications of alternative DNA typing methods, such as MLVF and *spa*-typing, underscore their discriminatory power and other advantages over 'gold standard' methods, such as PFGE and MLST. (*This thesis*)
5. Certain clones of *S. aureus* attain a geo-spatial predominance, such as the *S. aureus* CC59 clone in Asia, and the exchange and spread of potentially dangerous clones through travel should not be under-estimated as a clear threat to public health worldwide. (*This thesis*)
6. As the rise of antibiotic-resistant 'superbugs' threatens public health and more importantly complicates treatment, better monitoring of antibiotic production, prescription and usage is urgently needed.
7. Humans have a compulsion to group and categorize both the living and non-living world and this is particularly true for microbiologists. (*This thesis*)
8. Crossing borders between different disciplines, such as microbiology and immunology, or bioinformatics and microbiology, paves the way for new scientific discoveries. (*This thesis*)
9. Humans are basically 'large, highly complex microbial communities with a fancy exoskeleton' that are superimposed on the bacterial tree of life (J.M. van Dijl) but the 'tug of war' between the complex host and its personal microbial communities is crucial for the balance between health and disease. (*This thesis*)
10. Today's microbiological research still relies too much on *in vitro* experiments, the results of which do not precisely reflect the *in vivo* situation.
11. It was good, as long as it lasted.
12. 'It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change.' (*Charles Darwin, 1809-1882*)
13. 'All my life through, the new sights of nature made me rejoice like a child.' (*Marie Curie, 1867-1934*)
14. 'Science and every day life can not and should not be separated.' (*Rosalind Franklin, 1920-1958*)

