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Title: Complete genome sequence of DSM 30083(T), the type strain (U5/41(T)) of *Escherichia coli*, and a proposal for delineating subspecies in microbial taxonomy
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Abstract: Although *Escherichia coli* is the most widely studied bacterial model organism and often considered to be the model bacterium per se, its type strain was until now forgotten from microbial genomics. As a part of the Genomic Encyclopedia of Bacteria and Archaea project, we here describe the features of *E. coli* DSM 30083(T) together with its genome sequence and annotation as well as novel aspects of its phenotype. The 5,038,133 bp containing genome sequence includes 4,762 protein-coding genes and 175 RNA genes as well as a single plasmid. Affiliation of a set of 250 genome-sequenced *E. coli* strains, *Shigella* and outgroup strains to the type strain of *E. coli* was investigated using digital DNA:DNA-hybridization (dDDH) similarities and differences in genomic G+C content. As in the majority of previous studies, results show *Shigella* spp. embedded within *E. coli* and in most cases forming a single subgroup of it. Phylogenomic trees also recover the proposed *E. coli* phylotypes as monophyla with minor exceptions and place DSM 30083T in phylotype B2 with *E. coli* S88 as its closest neighbor. The widely used lab strain K-12 is not only genomically but also physiologically strongly different from the type strain. The phylotypes do not express a uniform level of character divergence as measured using dDDH, however, thus an alternative arrangement is proposed and discussed in the context of bacterial subspecies. Analyses of the genome sequences of a large number of *E. coli* strains and of strains from > 100 other bacterial genera indicate a value of 79-80% dDDH as the most promising threshold for delineating subspecies, which in turn suggests the presence of five subspecies within *E. coli*.

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