1 Title

- 2 Genomic insights into adaptations of TMA-utilizing methanogens to diverse habitats
- 3 including the human gut
- 4 Running title
- 5 Insights into *Methanomassiliicoccales* in the human gut
- 6

7 Authors

- 8 Jacobo de la Cuesta-Zuluaga¹, Timothy D. Spector², Nicholas D. Youngblut¹, Ruth
- 9 E. Ley^{1#}

10

- ¹Department of Microbiome Science, Max Planck Institute for Developmental
- 12 Biology, 72076 Tübingen, Germany.

13

- 14 ²Department of Twin Research and Genetic Epidemiology, King's College London,
- 15 London SE1 7EH, UK

16

[#] correspondence: rley@tuebingen.mpg.de.

18 Abstract

19 Archaea of the order *Methanomassiliicoccales* use methylated-amines such 20 as trimethylamine as a substrate for methane production. They form two large 21 phylogenetic clades and reside in diverse environments, from soil to the human gut. 22 Two genera, one from each clade, inhabit the human gut: *Methanomassiliicoccus*, 23 which has one cultured representative, and "candidatus Methanomethylophilus", 24 which has none. Questions remain regarding their distribution across different 25 biomes and human populations, their association with other taxa in the human gut, 26 and whether host genetics correlate with their abundance. To gain insight into the 27 Methanomassiliicoccales, and the human-associated members in particular, we 28 performed a genomic comparison of 72 Methanomassiliicoccales genomes and 29 assessed their presence in metagenomes derived from the human gut (n=4472 30 representing 25 populations), nonhuman animal gut (n=145) and nonhost 31 environments (n=160). Our analyses showed that all taxa are generalists: they were 32 detected in animal gut and environmental samples. We confirmed two large clades, 33 one enriched in the gut, the other enriched in the environment, with notable 34 exceptions. Genomic adaptations to the gut include genome reduction, a set of 35 adhesion factors distinct from that of environmental taxa, and genes involved in the 36 shikimate pathway and bile resistance. Genomic adaptations differed by clade, not 37 habitat preference, indicating convergent evolution between the clades. In the 38 human gut, the relative abundance of Methanomassiliicoccales correlated with 39 trimethylamine-producing bacteria and was unrelated to host genotype. Our results 40 shed light on the microbial ecology of this group may help guide 41 Methanomassiliicoccales-based strategies for trimethylamine mitigation in 42 cardiovascular disease.

43 **Importance**

44 Methanomassiliicoccales are a lesser known component of the human gut 45 microbiota. This archaeal order is composed of methane producers that use 46 methylated amines, such as trimethylamine, in methane production. This group has 47 only one cultured representative; how they adapted to inhabit the mammalian gut 48 and how they interact with other microbes is largely unknown. Using bioinformatics 49 methods applied to DNA from a wide range of samples, we profiled the relative 50 abundances of these archaea in environmental and host-associated microbial 51 communities. We observed two groups of *Methanomassiliicoccales*, one largely 52 host-associated and one largely found in environmental samples, with some 53 exceptions. When host-associated, these archaea have a distinct set of genes 54 related to adhesion and possess genes related to bile resistance. We did not detect 55 Methanomassiliicoccales in all human populations tested but when present, they are 56 correlated with Bacteria known to produce trimethylamine. Since trimethylamine is 57 linked to cardiovascular disease risk, these intriguing Archaea may also be involved.

58 Introduction

59 Archaea generally make up a tenth or less of the biomass of the human gut 60 microbiota; however, they are widely prevalent and occupy a unique metabolic niche, 61 utilizing by-products of bacterial metabolism as substrate for methanogenesis (1). 62 The most widespread methanogens in the human gut are members of the order 63 Methanobacteriales. These include Methanobrevibacter smithii, which uses CO₂, 64 formate and H_2 as substrates for methane production (2), and *Methanosphaera* 65 stadtmanae, which consumes methanol and H_2 (3). Through the process of methane 66 formation, Archaea decrease partial pressures of H₂, thereby potentially increasing 67 the energetic efficiency of primary fermenters and the production of short-chain fatty 68 acids (4). Members of *Methanobacteriales* are the dominant species of the human 69 gut archaeome (1, 5).

70 A second archaeal lineage, the order *Methanomassiliicoccales*, is also found 71 within the human gut microbiota, yet its members are less well characterized than 72 those of Methanobacteriales. Members of the order Methanomassiliicoccales, 73 including human-derived Methanomassiliicoccus luminvensis, "candidatus 74 Methanomassiliicoccus intestinalis" and "candidatus Methanomethylophilus alvus", 75 perform H_2 -dependent methylotrophic methanogenesis as sole energy source (6–8). 76 Their genomes encode several methyltransferases and associated proteins used to 77 reduce methylamines and methanol to methane. Studies based on 16S rRNA and 78 mcrA gene diversity analysis indicate that the order Methanomassiliicoccales is 79 made up of two large clades, which mostly group species that have either a free 80 living (FL) or host associated (HA) lifestyle (9, 10). Based on analyses of the 81 genomes from three human-derived species from both clades, Borrel et al. (11) 82 suggested each clade colonized the mammalian gut independently. Members of the

83 HA clade, including the human-associated "ca. M. alvus", might be expected to show 84 adaptations similar to other methanogens from the gut microbiota (12, 13). How 85 members of the FL clade, including the human-associated *M. luminyensis* and "ca. 86 M. intestinalis". have converged on the gut niche remains to be explored. 87 A better understanding of the ecology of *Methanomassiliicoccales* may be of 88 interest to human health, as they can utilize mono-, di-, and trimethylamine (TMA) as 89 substrate for methanogenesis in the gut (14). TMA, a by-product of the bacterial metabolism of carnitine, choline, and other and choline-containing compounds, is 90 91 absorbed by the host and transformed in the liver into trimethylamine N-oxide 92 (TMAO) (15). In turn, circulating TMAO inhibits cholesterol transport and promotes 93 its accumulation in macrophages, inducing the formation of artherosclerotic plagues 94 (16). Decreasing TMA levels in the gut, and reducing circulating TMAO levels, has 95 been proposed as a therapeutic strategy for cardiovascular disease (17). One way to 96 use the gut microbiome to this end would be to boost levels of 97 Methanomassiliicoccales (18). To accomplish this goal requires a deeper 98 understanding of its ecology. 99 Here, we conducted a comparative analysis of 71 Methanomassiliicoccales 100 genomes, together with an additional metagenome-assembled genome (MAG) 101 corresponding to a strain of "ca. M. alvus", which we retrieved by metagenome 102 assembly of gut samples from subjects of the TwinsUK cohort (19). We used 305

103 publically available metagenomes to assess the prevalence of taxa across various

104 habitat types. While the two large clades grouping host-associated (HA) and free-

105 living (FL) taxa, are generally enriched in host-associated and environmental

106 metagenomes, a few exceptions stand out. Our results showed that the repertoire of

107 adhesion proteins encoded by the genomes of taxa from each clade differed. Genes

108	involved in bile resistance and the shikimate pathway are likely involved in the
109	adaptation to the gut environment of members of the HA clade, but not for the FL
110	clade. Thus, gut-adapted members converged on life in the gut using different
111	genomic adaptations. Methanomassiliicoccales genera present in the human gut
112	positively correlate with TMA-producing bacteria.
113	
114	Materials and Methods
115	Genome annotation and phylogenomic tree reconstruction
116	We downloaded 78 available genomes belonging to the order
117	Methanomassiliicoccales from the NCBI assembly database
118	(https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/assembly) as available in June 2018, and used
119	CheckM to assess their quality. For subsequent analyses, we included 71
120	substantially complete genomes (completeness ≥70 %) with low contamination
121	(contamination <5 %) (20), plus an additional high-quality metagenome-assembled
122	genome (MAG) corresponding to " <i>candidatus</i> Methanomethylophilus alvus" (see
123	supplementary methods and table S1). Gene calling, proteome prediction and
124	annotation was performed on each genome using Prokka 1.12 (21). Details of each
125	genome, including the original source of isolation, can be found in (table S1).
126	Using PhyloPhIAn 0.26 (22), we constructed a maximum-likelihood
127	phylogenomic tree using a concatenated alignment of multiple universally distributed
128	single copy marker genes of 72 publicly available genomes from the order
129	Methanomassiliicoccales. Of these, one was retrieved from pure culture, 6 were
130	obtained from enrichment cultures and 64 were MAGs. We included an additional
131	MAG retrieved from human gut metagenomes corresponding to " <i>ca</i> . M. alvus"
132	(supplementary results). Briefly, universal markers were obtained from the translated

amino acid sequences of the included genomes, aligned using mafft 7.3 (23) and

- 134 concatenated into a single sequence. We then used the concatenated alignment to
- reconstruct an maximum-likelihood phylogenetic tree using RAxML 8.1 (24); branch
- 136 support was estimated by 1000 bootstrap iterations and the tree was rooted by
- 137 including members of the order *Thermoplasmatales* as outgroup, namely
- 138 *Thermoplasma acidophilum* DSM 1728 (GenBank assembly accession:
- 139 GCA_000195915.1), Picrophilus oshimae DSM 9789 (GCA_900176435.1),
- 140 Ferroplasma acidarmanus fer1 (GCA_000152265.2), Acidiplasma aeolicum
- 141 (GCA_001402945.1) and Cuniculiplasma divulgatum (GCA_900090055.1). We used
- 142 iTOL (25) to visualize the tree.
- 143

144 Abundance of Methanomassiliicoccales in environmental and animal

145 gastrointestinal metagenomes

146 We retrieved 305 metagenome samples of gastrointestinal and environmental 147 origin (26) sequenced using the Illumina HiSeg platform (table S2). Sequences were 148 then downloaded from the Sequence Read Archive (SRA) and quality-controlled 149 (see supplementary methods). To avoid the issue of multiple mapping, we 150 dereplicated the 72 genomes at a species-level threshold (95 % ANI) using dRep, 151 resulting in 29 representative genomes. Next, we guantified the abundance of 152 dereplicated *Methanomassiliicoccales* genomes in these samples using KrakenUniq 153 v.0.5.8 (27). Statistical analyses were performed using R v.3.5.1 (28). We estimated 154 the enrichment of each representative Methanomassiliicoccales on host or 155 environmental metagenomes using DESeg2 (29) on sequence counts and 156 classifying metagenome samples as either host-derived or environmental. We 157 applied hierarchical clustering using Ward's method on the log-fold-change of

environmental vs gastrointestinal enrichment of each taxon and calculated the
cophenetic correlation with the phylogenomic tree using the ape package of R (30).

160

161 Comparative genomics

The predicted proteome of each included genome was used to to assign orthology clusters using panX 1.6.0 (31). We used InterProScan (32) and eggNOG mapper 1.0.3 (33) with DIAMOND 0.8.36 (34) against the optimized archaeal database to improve the annotation of gene clusters. Phylogenetic signal of genome characteristics and gene cluster presence was tested using the phylosignal package of R with the local indicator of phylogenetic association (LIPA) (35).

168 The R package micropan (36) was used to create a principal component 169 analysis (PCA) of gene cluster presence. We compared the gene cluster content 170 between clades to determine gene clusters enriched on clades FL or HA using 171 phylogenetic ANOVA using the R package phytools (37). To reduce the number of 172 comparisons we first removed low frequency gene clusters by filtering those with 173 near zero variance. The above analysis was repeated by comparing gene cluster 174 content between taxa significantly enriched on gut or environmental samples, prior 175 removal of taxa not significantly enriched in either biome class. We adjusted P 176 values with the Benjamini-Hochberg method.

We assessed the presence of eukaryote-like proteins (ELPs) (38) by
combining the counts of gene clusters classified by InterProScan as any of the
following: Sel1 containing proteins (Sel1), Listeria-Bacteroides repeat containing
proteins (List-Bact), tetratricopeptide repeats (TPRs), Ankyrin repeats (ANKs),
Leucine-rich repeats (LRRs), Fibronectin type III (fn3) domains, Laminin G domain,
Bacterial Ig-like domains, YadA-like domain (Yersinia adhesin A), TadE-like domain

or Invasion protein B (ialB). Likewise, we characterized the presence of parallel betahelix repeat-containing proteins, also known as adhesin-like proteins (ALPs).

185

186 Characterization of Methanomassiliicoccales distribution across human

187 populations

188 We obtained sample metadata from publicly available studies using the 189 curatedMetagenomicData v.1.17.0 package of Bioconductor (39). Samples were selected according to the following criteria: i) shotgun gut metagenomes sequenced 190 191 using the Illumina HiSeg platform with a median read length > 95 bp; ii) with 192 available SRA accession; iii) labeled as adults or seniors, or with a reported age ≥ 18 193 years; iv) without report of antibiotic consumption (i.e. no or NA); v) without report of 194 pregnancy (i.e. no or NA); vi) non-lactating women (i.e. no or NA); vii) without report 195 of gangrene, pneumonia, cellulitis, adenoma, colorectal cancer, arthritis, Behcet's 196 disease, cirrhosis or inflammatory bowel disease. Only forward reads were 197 downloaded and processed. A total of 4472 samples from 34 independent studies 198 were downloaded from the SRA between December 2019 and February 2020 (table 199 S3) and quality controlled as described in supplementary methods. 200 Reads were classified using Kraken v.2.0 (40) and a Bayesian re-estimation

200 Reads were classified using Kraken V.2.0 (40) and a Bayesian re-estimation
201 of the species-level abundance of each sample was then performed using Bracken
202 v.2.2 (41). We utilized custom databases created using the Struo pipeline (42) based
203 on GTDB release 86 (available at http://ftp.tue.mpg.de/ebio/projects/struo/). Taxa
204 with <100 reads in a given sample were considered as absent. We obtained
205 complete taxonomic annotations from NCBI taxIDs with TaxonKit 0.2.4
206 (https://bioinf.shenwei.me/taxonkit/). To determine the cooccurrence patterns of the
207 detected *Methanomassiliicoccales* in the human gut we used the cooccur package of

208 R (43): to determine their coabundance patterns, we calculated the proportionality of 209 taxa abundance (rho) with the propr package (44). The Ime4 and ImerTest R 210 packages (45) were used to fit linear mixed effects models to test differences of 211 Methanomassiliicoccales genera log-transformed abundance by westernization 212 status, age and gender with F-tests and P-values determined via the Satterthwaite's 213 method (ANOVA Type II sum of squares). Similarly, we employed binomial linear 214 mixed models to test differences of *Methanomassiliicoccales* genera prevalence. 215 We assessed the heritability of *Methanomassiliicoccales* taxa by comparing 216 relative abundances within 153 monozygotic (MZ) and 200 dizygotic (DZ) twin pairs 217 using the taxonomic profiles of 706 gut metagenome samples from the United 218 Kingdom Adult Twin Registry (TwinsUK) (19, 46, 47) with a sequencing depth >5 219 million reads/sample. We aggregated abundances at the genus level and removed 220 genera with a prevalence <5 %. Absolute read counts were transformed using the 221 Yeo-Johnson transformation and adjusted by BMI, sex and sequencing depth (19, 222 46). For each genus, we calculated the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) in MZ 223 and DZ twins with the irr package of R, and adjusted P-values for multiple 224 comparisons using the Benjamini-Hochberg method. As control we compared the 225 mean ICC across all taxa between MZ and DZ twins using the Mann-Whitney test, 226 and by assessing the ICC of specific taxa known previously reported as heritable in 227 the same population (Methanobrevibacter, Faecalibacterium, Christensenella and 228 *Bifidobacterium*) (46, 48). We carried a sensitivity analysis by repeating these 229 analyses on a subset of 394 samples (80 MZ and 117 DZ twin pairs) with a 230 sequencing depth of >12 million reads/sample.

231

232 Data and code availability

- 233 The metagenomic sequence data generated during this study have been
- 234 deposited in the European Nucleotide Archive with accession ID PRJEB40256. The
- 235 jupyter notebooks with analysis code are available at
- 236 https://github.com/leylabmpi/Methanomassilii. The "candidatus
- 237 Methanomethylophilus alvus" MAG here generated can be found at
- 238 http://ftp.tue.mpg.de/ebio/projects/Mmassilii
- 239
- 240 **Results**

241 Genome-based phylogeny confirms two large Methanomassiliioccales clades

242 Based on whole-genome phylogenetic analysis, the order 243 Methanomassiliicoccales forms two clades with robust support (figure 1). This 244 phylogeny is in agreement with previously reported phylogenies based on 16S rRNA 245 and mcrA genes (9, 49, 50). A third distal clade was formed by two closely related 246 MAGs generated in a recent massive metagenome assembly effort (51), which we 247 labeled external (EX; figure 1). We use the terminology of Borrel et al., (52): the 248 clade including *Methanomassiliicoccus* is labeled free-living (FL), and the clade 249 containing "candidatus Methanomethylophilus" host-associated (HA).

As observed previously (9), the reported source of the genomes was not always consistent with the clade in which it was grouped. For instance, while publicly available genomes originally retrieved from human, baboon, elephant and cow gastrointestinal tracts were related to "*candidatus* Methanomethylophilus" (HA), this clade also contained MAGs derived from digestor and reactors (figure 1) reportedly not treating animal waste (table S1). Moreover, MAGs retrieved from pit mud of solid-state fermentation reactors used for the production of Chinese liquor were

257	present in both the HA and FL clades (table S1). Similarly, " <i>ca.</i> M. intestinalis"
258	Issoire-Mx1, M. luminyensis B10, and Methanomassiliicoccales archaeon RumEn
259	M1, all retrieved from mammal hosts, grouped in the FL clade.
260	
261	Abundance of Methanomassiliicoccales clades differs in gastrointestinal and
262	environmental samples
263	We assessed the abundance of species-level representative
264	Methanomassiliicoccales taxa in publicly available metagenomes that included 145
265	samples from gastrointestinal tracts of non-human animals, such as cats, pigs, elks,
266	cows, sheep, mice, white-throated woodrats, trouts, chickens and geese, and 160
267	environmental samples from sediment, ice, and diverse water and soil sources (table
268	S2).
269	Taxa from all three clades were detected in a wide range of metagenomes
270	from environmental and gut origin. We observed differences in environmental
271	preference by clade. Abundance of taxa from Clade EX was highest on
272	environmental metagenomes (0.001 $\% \pm 0.0012$) (figure 1). They were also detected
273	in gut samples (0.0002 % \pm 0.0005), albeit with a very low abundance in fecal
274	(0.0003 % ± 0.0005), large intestine (0.0001 % ± 0.0002), stomach (0.0009 % ±
275	0.0006) metagenomes (figure 2). Given their low abundances, further analysis is
276	focused on the FL and HA clades.
277	The aggregated abundance of Clades FL and HA varied across biomes
278	(figure 2). In agreement with their names, HA clade members were enriched in host-

associated samples, and FL in non-host samples. The combined abundance of

0.008), although non-zero abundances were observed in digestive system

members of Clade FL was higher in samples from environmental biomes (0.01 % ±

279

280

281

metagenomes (0.008 % \pm 0.015), with some samples containing levels comparable to that of Clade HA (figure 2).

The mean abundance of Clade HA in aggregate was higher in metagenomes from gut samples (0.014 % \pm 0.03) compared to environmental biomes (0.004 % \pm 0.008). However, among the environmental biomes, non-zero abundances of Clade HA were detected in freshwater (0.002 % \pm 0.003), marine (0.006 % \pm 0.011), saline and alkaline (0.002 % \pm 0.002) and soil (0.004 % \pm 0.003) samples.

We further validated the differences in clade abundances across biomes by generating a dendrogram of *Methanomassiliicoccales* taxa using the fold-change enrichment of individual taxa on gut versus environmental biomes, that is, the effect size of their enrichment in either direction. We then compared the structure of this dendrogram with that of the phylogenomic tree and found that they were positively correlated (cophenetic correlation = 0.67, P val. < 0.01).

295 Overall, we observed a low abundance of individual Methanomassiliicoccales 296 taxa across all samples, ranging from 0 to 0.15 % (figure 2 and figure S1). The 297 enrichment analysis of individual taxa from Clade FL on diverse biomes showed that 298 while most were significantly enriched in environmental metagenomes, some taxa 299 showed the opposite enrichment. *M. luminyensis* and Methanomassiliicoccus sp. 300 UBA386 were not significantly enriched in gut or environmental biomes. "ca. M. 301 intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1, Methanomassiliicoccales archaeon RumEn M1 and 302 Methanomassiliicoccus sp. UBA6 were significantly enriched in gut biomes (figure 1). 303 although they were also present in multiple environmental biomes (figure S1). 304 When assessed on a per-taxon basis, the vast majority of Clade HA taxa were 305 significantly enriched in gut samples, with the exception of "ca. M. termitum", which

306 was highly abundant in soil samples from grasslands and water samples from

307 intertidal zones (figure 1).

308

309 Genome characteristics and core genes functions differ between

310 *Methanomassiliicoccales clades*

Given the tendency of clades FL and HA to be enriched in environmental or animal metagenomes, respectively, we searched for genes and genome features linked to putative adaptations of *Methanomassiliicoccales* to an animal gut. For this, we compared 72 genomes from *Methanomassiliicoccales* taxa retrieved from

315 humans, non-human animals and environmental sources.

316 We observed that genomes were more similar to others closely located on the 317 phylogeny for genome GC content, genome length and total gene count (LIPA Adj. P 318 < 0.01 in all cases) (figure 3). To determine whether these features differed between 319 clades, while accounting for the autocorrelation due to evolutionary history, we 320 performed a phylogenetic ANOVA. Clade FL taxa had significantly larger genomes 321 (mean \pm sd: 1985.1 Kb \pm 245.1) than either the clades HA (1318.3 Kb \pm 187.3) or EX 322 (1872.2 Kb ± 173.8) (phylogenetic ANOVA Adj. P = 0.028). In accord, Clade FL also 323 had the highest gene count (FL: 2153.1 genes \pm 233.7; HA: 1377.7 genes \pm 187.7; 324 EX 1567.0 genes ± 90.5. Adj. P = 0.025). While non-significant, clades HA and EX 325 taxa tended to have a lower GC content than Clade FL taxa (FL: 59.1 $\% \pm 4.8$; HA: 326 55.8 % ± 2.8; EX 54.4 % ± 0.5. Adj. P = 0.6).

To compare gene presence and absence across clades, we performed a pangenome analysis. After identification of orthologous gene clusters based on sequence similarity using PanX, we obtained 13,695 clusters, of which 7,312 were present at least once in Clade FL, 6,592 in Clade HA, and 1,833 in Clade EX. A 331 large proportion of gene clusters were of unknown function according to the COG 332 functional classification (38.4 $\% \pm 4.3$); gene clusters of unknown function tended to 333 be small, with only one or two genes (figure S2 A, B). Principal component (PC) 334 analysis of gene cluster presence/absence clearly differentiated clades along PC1. 335 We defined outlier taxa as FL taxa enriched in gut biomes 336 (Methanomassiliicoccales archaeon RumEn M1, Methanomassiliicoccus sp. UBA6, 337 "ca. Methanomassiliicoccus intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1, Methanomassiliicoccus 338 *luminvensis* B10 and Methanomassiliicoccus sp. UBA386) and the HA taxon 339 enriched in non-host biomes ("ca. M. termitum"). Outliers mostly clustered with their 340 close relatives, not with the taxa enriched in the same biome (figure 4), with the 341 exception of "ca. Methanomassiliicoccus intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1, which did not 342 cluster with either clade. 343 344 Gene clusters enriched in Clade HA evidence adaptation to the gut 345 environment 346 Because of the small number of genomes that cluster within the Clade EX. 347 and because they are largely absent from animal-associated samples, subsequent 348 analyses focus on comparisons between the clades FL and HA. 349 To identify gene clusters potentially involved in the adaptation of members of 350 Clade HA to a host environment, we compared the gene cluster content between 351 clades. The gene cluster frequency spectrum shows many clusters with a small 352 number of genes: 7,990 (58.3 %) gene clusters were singletons and 2,002 (14.6 %) 353 were doubletons (figure S2 A, B). After removing rare gene clusters by filtering those 354 with near zero variance, we included 2937 clusters, which we then used to perform 355 in phylogenetic ANOVAs. Results reveal 14 gene clusters significantly enriched in

356 HA compared to FL (Adj. P < 0.1 in all cases). Three gene clusters are involved in 357 detoxification and xenobiotic metabolism, namely, bile acid:sodium symporter 358 (InterPro accession IPR002657), bleomycin resistance protein (IPR029068) and 359 HAD-superfamily hydrolase (IPR006357). Two clusters are related to shikimate or 360 chorismate metabolism: chorismate mutase II (IPR002701) and prephenate 361 dehydratase (IPR001086). Other annotated clusters include the small unit of 362 exonuclease VII (IPR003761), holliday junction resolvase Hic (IPR002732), nitrogen 363 regulatory protein PII (IPR015867), xylose isomerase-like protein (IPR013022) and 364 metal-binding domain containing protein (IPR019271). Four had poor or no 365 annotation (table 1).

366

367 Genomic adaptations to the gut of members of the FL clade

368 To determine whether outlier taxa belonging to Clade FL had similar 369 adaptations to the gut as members of Clade HA, we explored gene clusters present 370 in these outliers and in Clade HA but that were rare in other members of Clade FL. 371 We selected gene clusters present in the core genome of Clade HA (i.e. present in 372 >80 % of taxa from this clade, see supplementary results) and present in less than 373 half of FL taxa. A total of 15 gene clusters were obtained, most of them encoded by 374 only one of the outlier taxa. Two gene clusters, ferrous iron transport proteins A and 375 B (IPR030389 and IPR007167), were present in three of the outliers 376 (Methanomassiliicoccus luminyensis B10, "candidatus Methanomassiliicoccus 377 intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1 and Methanomassiliicoccales archaeon RumEn M1). Other 378 clusters detected in more than one outlier included an uncharacterised membrane 379 protein (IPR005182, in Methanomassiliicoccus sp. UBA6 and 380 Methanomassiliicoccales archaeon RumEn M1), a putative nickel-responsive

regulator (IPR014864, in Methanomassiliicoccus luminyensis B10 and
Methanomassiliicoccus sp UBA386), and an ABC transporter (IPR037294, in
Methanomassiliicoccus luminyensis B10 and Methanomassiliicoccus sp UBA386).
The remaining gene clusters, detected once, corresponded to transcriptional
regulators or proteins of unknown function.

386

387 The genomes of taxa from clades HA and FL encode distinct repertoires of 388 adhesion proteins

389 We compared between FL and HA clades two large groups of membrane 390 proteins involved in adhesion: eukaryote-like proteins (ELPs), a series of protein 391 families involved in microbial adherence to its host (38), and adhesin-like proteins 392 (ALPs), a class of proteins hypothesized to be involved in the microbe-microbe 393 interactions of *Methanobacteriales* in the gut (13). We aggregated the counts of gene 394 clusters annotated as the ALP and ELP classes, and performed phylogenetic 395 ANOVA. This analysis showed that members of each clade tended to encode a 396 different repertoire of adhesion proteins (figure 3). Taxa from Clade HA had a higher 397 mean count of tetratricopeptide repeats (Mean±SD count; HA: 16.30±06.56, FL: 398 9.55±1.70), Sel1 repeats (HA: 9.32±5.69, FL: 0.35±1.35), Listeria-Bacteroides 399 repeats (HA: 3.68±3.76, FL: 1.65±5.78) and leucine-rich repeats (HA: 1.5±2.15, FL: 400 1.1±2.02) than FL taxa, although we did not observe significant differences in their 401 frequency (Adj. P > 0.1 in all cases). Conversely, ALPs (FL: 2.25±1.48, HA: 402 0.14±0.61) and Ig-like domains, (FL: 1.55±1.32, HA: 0.20±0.53) tended to be more 403 abundant in the genomes of members of Clade FL. 404 Interestingly, outlier taxa from Clade FL had gene counts of several of the

405 adhesion factors higher than the mean of their own clade and more characteristic of

406 clade HA. In some cases, the gene counts were higher than the mean for Clade HA. 407 These included Listeria-Bacteroides repeats (gene cluster count - M. luminyensis: 2, 408 "ca. M. intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1: 26, Methanomassiliicoccales archaeon RumEn M1: 409 2), Sel1 repeats (M. luminyensis: 1, "ca. M. intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1: 6), and leucine-410 rich repeats (*M. luminyensis*: 5, "*ca.* M. intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1: 7). 411 412 Methanomassiliicoccales taxa cooccur with each other, with other Archaea, 413 and with TMA producing bacteria in the human gut 414 We characterized the distribution of Methanomassiliicoccales across a 415 collection of human gut metagenomes derived from 34 studies. Together, the 416 combined 4472 samples represented people from 22 countries, resulting in 35 417 unique datasets (*i.e.*, study-country combination). Across the whole set, we detected 418 just two genera: Methanomassiliicoccus (Clade FL) and "ca. Methanomethylophilus" 419 (Clade HA), both rare members of the human gut microbiota (figure 5). "ca. 420 Methanomethylophilus" was detectable in 19 out of 35 datasets; on these 19 421 datasets it had a prevalence ranging from 0.5 % to 41.7 %, and mean abundance ranged from 4.8*10⁻⁶ % to 2.2*10⁻² %. Similarly, *Methanomassiliicoccus* was 422 423 detectable in 22 of the 35 datasets; on the 22 datasets it had a prevalence range of 1 % to 25.7 % and a mean abundance range of 1.5×10^{-5} % to 1.0×10^{-2} % (table S4). 424 425 We tested associations of these two genera with age, sex and westernization 426 status of the subjects using linear mixed models that included the dataset and 427 country as random effects. Subjects from non-westernized countries had a 428 significantly higher prevalence of "ca. Methanomethylophilus" (mean prevalence ± 429 SD: Non-westernized = $8.9 \% \pm 28.5$, Westernized $1.1 \% \pm 10.3$; P Adj. = 0.002). 430 Westernized individuals were more likely to harbor higher *Methanomassiliicoccus*,

431 although differences were not significant (Non-westernized = $3.9 \% \pm 19.4$,

Westernized 5.0 % \pm 21.7; P Adj. > 0.1). The age and sex of the individuals did not explain variance in the prevalence or abundance of either genus (Adj. P > 0.1 in all cases).

435 To identify other microbial taxa positively associated with members of 436 Methanomassiliicoccales in the human gut, we calculated a network of positively 437 associated microorganisms (*i.e.* coabundant taxa) across samples (rho >0.1 in all 438 cases) (53). In addition, we determined which taxa were present with members of 439 *Methanomassiliicoccales* more than expected by chance (*i.e.* cooccurring taxa) 440 relative to a permuted null model (43). Results showed that both "ca. 441 Methanomethylophilus" and Methanomassiliicoccus were part of the same 442 coabundance network, together with a third archaeal genus, Methanoculleus (order 443 Methanomicrobiales). We did not find evidence of positive or negative abundance 444 associations of either Methanomassiliicoccales genus with Methanobrevibacter. 445 Coocurrence analysis showed a random association pattern between these taxa (P 446 val. > 0.05 for both "ca. Methanomethylophilus" and Methanomassiliicoccus), 447 indicating that their ecological niches do not overlap with Methanobrevibacter. 448 Analysis of the combined network of "ca. Methanomethylophilus" and 449 Methanomassiliicoccus revealed a large overlap between taxa associated with either 450 genus (figure 6): out of 119 taxa in the network, 86 (72.3 %) were associated with 451 both. Moreover, 51 taxa (42.9 %) also had a significant positive cooccurrence pattern 452 with both genera (P val. < 0.05 in all cases). Most bacterial members of this network 453 had an overall low relative abundance. Interestingly, they included several taxa 454 whose genomes contain genes encoding enzymes involved in TMA production,

455 including Bacteroides, Campylobacter, Yokenella, Mobiluncus, Proteus, Providencia
456 and Edwardsiella (54).

457

458 Abundance of Methanomassiliicoccales is not concordant in monozygotic or

- 459 dizygotic human twins
- 460 To evaluate whether host genetics influences the abundance of
- 461 *Methanomassiliicoccales* in the human gut, we compared the intraclass correlation
- 462 coefficient (ICC) of their abundances at the genus level using a set of 153
- 463 monozygotic (MZ) and 200 dizygotic (DZ) twin pairs from the TwinsUK cohort. As
- 464 control, we first compared the mean ICC across all taxa between MZ and DZ twins,
- 465 and found that ICC_{MZ} (0.1) was significantly higher than ICC_{DZ} (0.03) (P val. < 0.01).

466 In addition, we assessed the ICC values of bacterial (Christensenella,

467 Faecalibacterium and Bifidobacterium) and archaeal (Methanobrevibacter), and

468 consistently found a higher correlation on MZ compared to DZ twins (table S5). We

469 were only able to assess ICC values of *Methanomassiliicoccus*, as it was the only

470 *Methanomassiliicoccales* detected in the twins with a prevalence (8.64 %) above the

471 5 % cutoff (see methods). We did not detect a significant concordance between the

472 abundances of *Methanomassiliicoccus* in MZ (ICC_{MZ} = 0.004, Adj. P = 0.59) or in DZ

473 twins (ICC_{DZ} = 0.017, Adj. P = 0.71). Given the low abundance of

474 *Methanomassiliicoccales* taxa, we performed a sensitivity analysis using samples

- 475 with a high sequencing depth (>12 million reads/sample), however, we did not
- 476 observe differences in the abundance and prevalence of the
- 477 *Methanomassiliicoccales* genera nor the ICC estimates (not shown).

479 **Discussion**

480 While the source of the members of the *Methanomassiliicoccales* has been 481 noted in previous surveys of single markers such as 16S rRNA and mcrA genes (9, 482 10), here we searched metagenomes from host associated and environmental 483 samples for their relative abundances. Overall, the HA taxa were enriched in host 484 associated samples and the FL taxa in environmental samples; intriguingly, all taxa 485 regardless of clade were detected in both biomes. This suggests that members of 486 the order *Methanomassiliicoccales* are generalists with an overall habitat preference 487 according to clade, although there were some exceptions to the general pattern. We 488 show that members of *Methanomassiliicoccales* use many of the same adaptations 489 to the gut as other methanogens. These adaptations include genome reduction, and 490 genes involved in the shikimate pathway and bile resistance. In addition, gut-491 enriched taxa possess a distinct repertoire of genes encoding adhesion factors. We 492 observed that potential adaptations to the gut differed by clade, not preferred habitat, 493 indicating convergence on a shared niche through different genomic solutions. In the 494 human gut, Methanomassiliicoccales taxa correlated with TMA-producing bacteria, 495 rather than host genetics or other host factors.

496 For members of the HA clade, adaptations to life in the gut included an 497 enrichment of genes involved in bile acid transport, efflux pumps, and hydrolases, 498 which play a role in tolerance to these compounds in the gastrointestinal tract (55). 499 This adaptation is also shared with other members of the gut microbiota, including 500 Methanobacteriales: M. smithii and M. stadtmanae are resistant to bile salts (2, 3). 501 Other gene clusters with known function enriched in Clade HA are involved in 502 metabolism of shikimate and chorismate. The shikimate pathway is involved in the 503 synthesis of aromatic amino acids in plants and microbes, but is absent in mammals.

Shikimate metabolism is carried out by archaeal (56) and bacterial (57, 58) members
of the animal gut microbiota, and was reported as one of the most conserved
metabolic modules in a large-scale gene catalogue from the human gut (59).
Derivatives from the aromatic amino acids are known to be bioactive in the mammal
host (60).

509 In addition, members of the HA clade had a particular set of adhesion factors, 510 known to be involved in the maintenance of syntrophic relationships of the 511 methanogens with bacterial (12, 61) or eukaryotic (62) microorganisms. Two groups 512 of adhesion factors, proteins containing Sel1 domains and Listeria-Bacteroides 513 repeats, have been previously studied on Methanomassiliicoccales taxa retrieved 514 from the gut (11, 52). Our assessment of these factors in the broader context of the 515 order Methanomassiliicoccales showed that these two groups of proteins are 516 characteristic of Clade HA rather than FL, with the exception of the outlier taxa. 517 Indeed, while the repertoire of ELPs and ALPs differs between HA and FL taxa, it 518 was similar between species inhabiting the gut regardless of their clade. 519 In contrast, members of Clade FL appear to be generalists that colonized the 520 animal gut independently from the HA clade. It has been previously noted that M. 521 luminyensis, an outlier from Clade FL, could have a facultative association to the 522 animal gut. It possesses genes involved in nitrogen fixation, oxidative stress (11) and 523 mercury methylation (52), which are common in soil microorganisms but rare in 524 members of the gut microbiota (63). In accord, we observed that members of Clade 525 FL are widespread and abundant on soil, water and gut metagenomes, with a 526 preference for environmental biomes. Similarities in ELP content between gut-527 dwelling taxa from both clades indicate that interaction with the host or other 528 members of the gut microbiota might be a key factor in the adaptation of these

529 methanogens.

530 Analysis of the gene content of outlier taxa from Clade FL showed that they 531 tended to be more similar to members of their own clade than to taxa from Clade HA, 532 with the exception of "ca. M. intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1, which was distinct from either 533 Clade FL and HA. In addition there was little overlap in gene clusters commonly 534 observed in Clade HA and outlier taxa from Clade FL, with the exception of the 535 adhesion factors discussed below. These observations support the hypothesis that 536 colonization of animal guts by members of *Methanomassiliicoccales* occurred in two 537 independent events (11, 52), and suggests that there is not one solution to life in the 538 gut for these Archaea, as members from two clades seem to have solved the 539 problem with a different set of adaptations.

540 Characterization of the abundance of Methanomassiliicoccales across human 541 populations showed members of this group are rare in the microbiota of healthy 542 adults. We did not detect them in all the studied populations, and when detected, 543 they had low prevalence and abundance. Nevertheless, this analysis allowed us to 544 assess whether Archaea in the human gut are mutually exclusive. We observed 545 positive correlations of "ca. Methanomethylophilus" and Methanomassiliicoccus with 546 each other and with Methanoculleus, another rare archaeal member of the gut 547 microbiota (64). We did not find evidence of association between members of 548 Methanomassiliicoccales and Methanobrevibacter, positive or otherwise, confirming 549 the previous report that these methanogens are not mutually exclusive (46): 550 abundance of H_2 in the gut, together with differences in other substrate utilization, 551 might result in non-overlapping niches (65). 552 While genus *Methanobrevibacter* has been consistently found to have a

553 moderate heritability the TwinsUK (19, 46, 66) and other cohorts (48, 67), it was not

the case for members of *Methanomassiliicoccales*. Similar to humans, methane
production (68) and abundance of *Methanobrevibacter* (69) are also heritable in
bovine cattle, but not *Methanomassiliicoccales* taxa (69). Thus, host genetics might
be linked to particular taxa and methanogenesis pathways, not to all *Archaea* or
methane production as a whole.

Genera "ca. Methanomethylophilus" and Methanomassiliicoccus cooccur with 559 560 TMA-producing bacteria (54), further supporting their potential use as a way of 561 targeting intestinal TMA (70). The exact nature of the ecological relationships each of 562 these taxa establishes with other members of the microbiome remains to be 563 elucidated. In a facilitation scenario between the methanogens and H_2 - and TMA-564 producers, freely available TMA and H_2 required for methylotrophic methanogenesis 565 could be utilized by Methanomassiliicoccales taxa (71), without cost to the producer. 566 Alternatively, the methanogens could establish syntrophic interactions with other 567 microorganisms, whereby the consumption of these metabolites is also beneficial to 568 the producer (71). 569 The present study extends our understanding of the order 570 Methanomassiliicoccales by revealing genomic adaptations to life in the gut by 571 members of both clades that make up this group. Furthermore, the positive 572 correlation between the relative abundances of these TMA-utilizing archaea with 573 TMA-producing bacteria in the gut is a first step towards understanding how they 574 may be harnessed for therapeutic management of gut TMA levels in the context of 575 cardiovascular disease.

576

577 Acknowledgements

578 This work was supported by the Max Planck Society. We thank EMBO, the

579	org	anizers and participants of the Bioinformatics and genome analyses course held				
580	at f	at the Fondazione Edmund Mach in San Michele all'Adige, Italy, for sponsoring the				
581	atte	attendance of J.dlC-Z and for their feedback. We are also grateful to Daphne Welter				
582	Jes	ssica Sutter and Albane Ruaud for the fruitful discussions and comments. The				
583	stu	dy also received support from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)				
584	Bic	Resource Clinical Research Facility and Biomedical Research Centre based at				
585	Gu	y's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and King's College London. We				
586	deo	clare no competing interests.				
587						
588	Re	ferences				
589	1.	Borrel G, Brugère J-F, Gribaldo S, Schmitz RA, Moissl-Eichinger C. 2020. The host-				
590		associated archaeome. Nat Rev Microbiol.				
591	2.	Miller TL, Wolin MJ. 1982. Enumeration of Methanobrevibacter smithii in human feces.				
592		Arch Microbiol 131:14–18.				
593	3.	Miller TL, Wolin MJ. 1985. Methanosphaera stadtmaniae gen. nov., sp. nov.: a species				
594		that forms methane by reducing methanol with hydrogen. Arch Microbiol 141:116–122.				
595	4.	Horz H-P, Conrads G. 2010. The discussion goes on: What is the role of Euryarchaeota				
596		in humans? Archaea 2010:967271.				
597	5.	Moissl-Eichinger C, Pausan M, Taffner J, Berg G, Bang C, Schmitz RA. 2018. Archaea				
598		Are Interactive Components of Complex Microbiomes. Trends Microbiol 26:70-85.				
599	6.	Borrel G, Harris HMB, Tottey W, Mihajlovski A, Parisot N, Peyretaillade E, Peyret P,				
600		Gribaldo S, O'Toole PW, Brugère J-F. 2012. Genome Sequence of "Candidatus				
601		Methanomethylophilus alvus" Mx1201, a Methanogenic Archaeon from the Human Gut				

Belonging to a Seventh Order of Methanogens. J Bacteriol 194:6944–6945.

603	7.	Borrel G, Harris HMB, Parisot N, Gaci N, Tottey W, Mihajlovski A, Deane J, Gribaldo S,
604		Bardot O, Peyretaillade E, Peyret P, O'Toole PW, Brugère J-F. 2013. Genome
605		Sequence of "Candidatus Methanomassiliicoccus intestinalis" Issoire-Mx1, a Third
606		Thermoplasmatales-Related Methanogenic Archaeon from Human Feces. Genome
607		Announc 1:e00453–13.
608	8.	Dridi B, Fardeau M-L, Ollivier B, Raoult D, Drancourt M. 2012. Methanomassiliicoccus
609		luminyensis gen. nov., sp. nov., a methanogenic archaeon isolated from human faeces.
610		Int J Syst Evol Microbiol 62:1902–1907.
611	9.	Söllinger A, Schwab C, Weinmaier T, Loy A, Tveit AT, Schleper C, Urich T. 2016.
612		Phylogenetic and genomic analysis of Methanomassiliicoccales in wetlands and animal
613		intestinal tracts reveals clade-specific habitat preferences. FEMS Microbiol Ecol
614		92:fiv149.
615	10.	Speth DR, Orphan VJ. 2018. Metabolic marker gene mining provides insight in global
616		diversity and, coupled with targeted genome reconstruction, sheds further light on
617		metabolic potential of the. PeerJ 6:e5614.
618	11.	Borrel G, Parisot N, Harris HMB, Peyretaillade E, Gaci N, Tottey W, Bardot O, Raymann
619		K, Gribaldo S, Peyret P, O'Toole PW, Brugère J-F. 2014. Comparative genomics
620		highlights the unique biology of Methanomassiliicoccales, a Thermoplasmatales-related
621		seventh order of methanogenic archaea that encodes pyrrolysine. BMC Genomics
622		15:679.
623	12.	Samuel BS, Hansen EE, Manchester JK, Coutinho PM, Henrissat B, Fulton R, Latreille
624		P, Kim K, Wilson RK, Gordon JI. 2007. Genomic and metabolic adaptations of
625		Methanobrevibacter smithii to the human gut. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A 104:10643-
626		10648.
627	13.	Hansen EE, Lozupone CA, Rey FE, Wu M, Guruge JL, Narra A, Goodfellow J, Zaneveld

628	JR, McDonald DT, Goodrich JA, Heath AC, Knight R, Gordon JI. 2011. Pan-genome of
629	the dominant human gut-associated archaeon, Methanobrevibacter smithii, studied in
630	twins. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A 108 Suppl 1:4599–4606.

- 631 14. Söllinger A, Urich T. 2019. Methylotrophic methanogens everywhere physiology and
- 632 ecology of novel players in global methane cycling. Biochem Soc Trans 47:1895–1907.
- 633 15. Brown JM, Hazen SL. 2018. Microbial modulation of cardiovascular disease. Nat Rev
 634 Microbiol 16:171–181.
- 635 16. Geng J, Yang C, Wang B, Zhang X, Hu T, Gu Y, Li J. 2018. Trimethylamine N-oxide

636 promotes atherosclerosis via CD36-dependent MAPK/JNK pathway. Biomed
637 Pharmacother 97:941–947.

- Wang Z, Roberts AB, Buffa JA, Levison BS, Zhu W, Org E, Gu X, Huang Y, ZamanianDaryoush M, Culley MK, DiDonato AJ, Fu X, Hazen JE, Krajcik D, DiDonato JA, Lusis
 AJ, Hazen SL. 2015. Non-lethal Inhibition of Gut Microbial Trimethylamine Production
 for the Treatment of Atherosclerosis. Cell 163:1585–1595.
- 642 18. Brugère J-F, Borrel G, Gaci N, Tottey W, O'Toole PW, Malpuech-Brugère C. 2014.
- Archaebiotics: proposed therapeutic use of archaea to prevent trimethylaminuria andcardiovascular disease. Gut Microbes 5:5–10.
- 19. Xie H, Guo R, Zhong H, Feng Q, Lan Z, Qin B, Ward KJ, Jackson MA, Xia Y, Chen X,

646 Chen B, Xia H, Xu C, Li F, Xu X, Al-Aama JY, Yang H, Wang J, Kristiansen K, Wang J,

- 647 Steves CJ, Bell JT, Li J, Spector TD, Jia H. 2016. Shotgun Metagenomics of 250 Adult
- Twins Reveals Genetic and Environmental Impacts on the Gut Microbiome. Cell
 systems 3:572–584.e3.
- 650 20. Parks DH, Imelfort M, Skennerton CT, Hugenholtz P, Tyson GW. 2015. CheckM:
- assessing the quality of microbial genomes recovered from isolates, single cells, and
- metagenomes. Genome Res 25:1043–1055.

653 21. Seemann T. 2014. Prokka: rapid prokaryotic genome annotation. Bioinformatics

- 654 30:2068–2069.
- 22. Segata N, Börnigen D, Morgan XC, Huttenhower C. 2013. PhyloPhIAn is a new method
- 656 for improved phylogenetic and taxonomic placement of microbes. Nat Commun 4:2304.
- 657 23. Katoh K, Standley DM. 2013. MAFFT multiple sequence alignment software version 7:
- 658 improvements in performance and usability. Mol Biol Evol 30:772–780.
- 659 24. Stamatakis A. 2014. RAxML version 8: a tool for phylogenetic analysis and post660 analysis of large phylogenies. Bioinformatics 30:1312–1313.
- 661 25. Letunic I, Bork P. 2016. Interactive tree of life (iTOL) v3: an online tool for the display

and annotation of phylogenetic and other trees. Nucleic Acids Res 44:W242–5.

- 663 26. Mitchell AL, Scheremetjew M, Denise H, Potter S, Tarkowska A, Qureshi M, Salazar
- GA, Pesseat S, Boland MA, Hunter FMI, Ten Hoopen P, Alako B, Amid C, Wilkinson DJ,
- 665 Curtis TP, Cochrane G, Finn RD. 2018. EBI Metagenomics in 2017: enriching the
- 666 analysis of microbial communities, from sequence reads to assemblies. Nucleic Acids
- 667 Res 46:D726–D735.
- Breitwieser FP, Baker DN, Salzberg SL. 2018. KrakenUniq: confident and fast
 metagenomics classification using unique k-mer counts. Genome Biol 19:198.
- 670 28. R Core Team. 2018. R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing. R
 671 Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria.
- 672 29. Love MI, Huber W, Anders S. 2014. Moderated estimation of fold change and dispersion
 673 for RNA-seq data with DESeq2. Genome Biol 15:550.
- 674 30. Paradis E, Claude J, Strimmer K. 2004. APE: Analyses of Phylogenetics and Evolution
 675 in R language. Bioinformatics 20:289–290.

- 676 31. Ding W, Baumdicker F, Neher RA. 2018. panX: pan-genome analysis and exploration.
- 677 Nucleic Acids Res 46:e5.
- 678 32. Finn RD, Attwood TK, Babbitt PC, Bateman A, Bork P, Bridge AJ, Chang H-Y,
- 679 Dosztányi Z, El-Gebali S, Fraser M, Gough J, Haft D, Holliday GL, Huang H, Huang X,
- 680 Letunic I, Lopez R, Lu S, Marchler-Bauer A, Mi H, Mistry J, Natale DA, Necci M, Nuka
- 681 G, Orengo CA, Park Y, Pesseat S, Piovesan D, Potter SC, Rawlings ND, Redaschi N,
- 682 Richardson L, Rivoire C, Sangrador-Vegas A, Sigrist C, Sillitoe I, Smithers B, Squizzato
- 683 S, Sutton G, Thanki N, Thomas PD, Tosatto SCE, Wu CH, Xenarios I, Yeh L-S, Young
- 684 S-Y, Mitchell AL. 2017. InterPro in 2017-beyond protein family and domain annotations.
- 685 Nucleic Acids Res 45:D190–D199.
- 686 33. Huerta-Cepas J, Forslund K, Coelho LP, Szklarczyk D, Jensen LJ, von Mering C, Bork
- 687 P. 2017. Fast Genome-Wide Functional Annotation through Orthology Assignment by
 688 eggNOG-Mapper. Mol Biol Evol 34:2115–2122.
- Buchfink B, Xie C, Huson DH. 2015. Fast and sensitive protein alignment using
 DIAMOND. Nat Methods 12:59–60.
- 691 35. Keck F, Rimet F, Bouchez A, Franc A. 2016. phylosignal: an R package to measure,
- test, and explore the phylogenetic signal. Ecol Evol 6:2774–2780.
- 693 36. Snipen L, Liland KH. 2015. micropan: an R-package for microbial pan-genomics. BMC
 694 Bioinformatics 16:79.
- 695 37. Revell LJ. 2012. phytools: an R package for phylogenetic comparative biology (and
 696 other things): phytools: R package. Methods Ecol Evol 3:217–223.
- 697 38. Alex A, Antunes A. 2018. Genus-wide comparison of Pseudovibrio bacterial genomes
- 698 reveal diverse adaptations to different marine invertebrate hosts. PLoS One
- 699 13:e0194368.

700	39.	Pasolli E.	Schiffer L	, Manghi P	Renson A	Obenchain V	, Truong DT	Beghini F,	Malik F,
-----	-----	------------	------------	------------	----------	-------------	-------------	------------	----------

- Ramos M, Dowd JB, Huttenhower C, Morgan M, Segata N, Waldron L. 2017.
- Accessible, curated metagenomic data through ExperimentHub. Nat Methods 14:1023–
- 703 1024.
- 40. Wood DE, Lu J, Langmead B. 2019. Improved metagenomic analysis with Kraken 2.
 Genome Biol 20:257.
- 41. Lu J, Breitwieser FP, Thielen P, Salzberg SL. 2017. Bracken: estimating species
 abundance in metagenomics data. PeerJ Computer Science 3:e104.
- 42. de la Cuesta-Zuluaga J, Ley RE, Youngblut ND. 2020. Struo: a pipeline for building

custom databases for common metagenome profilers. Bioinformatics 36:2314–2315.

- 43. Griffith DM, Veech JA, Marsh CJ. 2016. cooccur : Probabilistic Species Co-Occurrence
 Analysis in R. J Stat Softw 69:1–17.
- 44. Quinn TP, Richardson MF, Lovell D, Crowley TM. 2017. propr: An R-package for
 Identifying Proportionally Abundant Features Using Compositional Data Analysis. Sci
- 714 Rep 7:16252.
- 45. Bates D, Mächler M, Bolker B, Walker S. 2015. Fitting Linear Mixed-Effects Models
 Using Ime4. J Stat Softw 67:1–48.
- 46. Goodrich JK, Waters JL, Poole AC, Sutter JL, Koren O, Blekhman R, Beaumont M, Van
 Treuren W, Knight R, Bell JT, Spector TD, Clark AG, Ley RE. 2014. Human genetics
 shape the gut microbiome. Cell 159:789–799.
- 47. Visconti A, Le Roy CI, Rosa F, Rossi N, Martin TC, Mohney RP, Li W, de Rinaldis E,
- Bell JT, Venter JC, Nelson KE, Spector TD, Falchi M. 2019. Interplay between the
 human gut microbiome and host metabolism. Nat Commun 10:4505.
- 48. Goodrich JK, Davenport ER, Clark AG, Ley RE. 2017. The Relationship Between the

724	Human Genome and Microbiome Comes into View. Annu Rev Genet 51:413–433.

- 725 49. Paul K, Nonoh JO, Mikulski L, Brune A. 2012. "Methanoplasmatales,"
- 726 Thermoplasmatales-related archaea in termite guts and other environments, are the
- seventh order of methanogens. Appl Environ Microbiol 78:8245–8253.
- 50. Borrel G, O'Toole PW, Harris HMB, Peyret P, Brugère J-F, Gribaldo S. 2013.
- 729 Phylogenomic data support a seventh order of Methylotrophic methanogens and
- provide insights into the evolution of Methanogenesis. Genome Biol Evol 5:1769–1780.
- 51. Parks DH, Rinke C, Chuvochina M, Chaumeil P-A, Woodcroft BJ, Evans PN,
- Hugenholtz P, Tyson GW. 2017. Recovery of nearly 8,000 metagenome-assembled
- genomes substantially expands the tree of life. Nat Microbiol 2:1533–1542.
- 52. Borrel G, McCann A, Deane J, Neto MC, Lynch DB, Brugère J-F, O'Toole PW. 2017.
- Genomics and metagenomics of trimethylamine-utilizing Archaea in the human gut
 microbiome. ISME J 11:2059–2074.
- 737 53. Quinn TP, Erb I, Richardson MF, Crowley TM. 2018. Understanding sequencing data as
 738 compositions: an outlook and review. Bioinformatics 34:2870–2878.
- 54. Fennema D, Phillips IR, Shephard EA. 2016. Trimethylamine and Trimethylamine N-
- 740 Oxide, a Flavin-Containing Monooxygenase 3 (FMO3)-Mediated Host-Microbiome
- 741 Metabolic Axis Implicated in Health and Disease. Drug Metab Dispos 44:1839–1850.
- 55. Begley M, Gahan CGM, Hill C. 2005. The interaction between bacteria and bile. FEMS
 Microbiol Rev 29:625–651.
- 56. Hovey R, Lentes S, Ehrenreich A, Salmon K, Saba K, Gottschalk G, Gunsalus RP,
- 745 Deppenmeier U. 2005. DNA microarray analysis of Methanosarcina mazei Gö1 reveals
- adaptation to different methanogenic substrates. Mol Genet Genomics 273:225–239.
- 57. Kamke J, Kittelmann S, Soni P, Li Y, Tavendale M, Ganesh S, Janssen PH, Shi W,

748		Froula J, Rubin EM, Attwood GT. 2016. Rumen metagenome and metatranscriptome
749		analyses of low methane yield sheep reveals a Sharpea-enriched microbiome
750		characterised by lactic acid formation and utilisation. Microbiome 4:56.
751	58.	LeBlanc JG, Milani C, de Giori GS, Sesma F, van Sinderen D, Ventura M. 2013.
752		Bacteria as vitamin suppliers to their host: a gut microbiota perspective. Curr Opin
753		Biotechnol 24:160–168.
754	59.	Almeida A, Nayfach S, Boland M, Strozzi F, Beracochea M, Shi ZJ, Pollard KS,
755		Sakharova E, Parks DH, Hugenholtz P, Segata N, Kyrpides NC, Finn RD. 2020. A
756		unified catalog of 204,938 reference genomes from the human gut microbiome. Nat
757		Biotechnol 490:55.
758	60.	Sridharan GV, Choi K, Klemashevich C, Wu C, Prabakaran D, Pan LB, Steinmeyer S,
759		Mueller C, Yousofshahi M, Alaniz RC, Lee K, Jayaraman A. 2014. Prediction and
760		quantification of bioactive microbiota metabolites in the mouse gut. Nat Commun
761		5:5492.
762	61.	Ruaud A, Esquivel-Elizondo S, de la Cuesta-Zuluaga J, Waters JL, Angenent LT,
763		Youngblut ND, Ley RE. 2020. Syntrophy via interspecies H2 transfer between and
764		underlies their global cooccurrence in the human gut. MBio 11:e03235–19.
765	62.	Ng F, Kittelmann S, Patchett ML, Attwood GT, Janssen PH, Rakonjac J, Gagic D. 2016.
766		An adhesin from hydrogen-utilizing rumen methanogen Methanobrevibacter
767		ruminantium M1 binds a broad range of hydrogen-producing microorganisms. Environ
768		Microbiol 18:3010–3021.
769	63.	Podar M, Gilmour CC, Brandt CC, Soren A, Brown SD, Crable BR, Palumbo AV,
770		Somenahally AC, Elias DA. 2015. Global prevalence and distribution of genes and
771		microorganisms involved in mercury methylation. Sci Adv 1:e1500675.
772	64.	Horz H-P. 2015. Archaeal Lineages within the Human Microbiome: Absent, Rare or

773 Elusive? Life 5:1333–1345.

- Feldewert C, Lang K, Brune A. 2020. The hydrogen threshold of obligately methylreducing methanogens. FEMS Microbiol Lett fnaa137.
- 66. Goodrich JK, Davenport ER, Beaumont M, Jackson MA, Knight R, Ober C, Spector TD,
- Bell JT, Clark AG, Ley RE. 2016. Genetic Determinants of the Gut Microbiome in UK
- 778 Twins. Cell Host Microbe 19:731–743.
- 779 67. Kurilshikov A, Medina-Gomez C, Bacigalupe R, Radjabzadeh D, Wang J, Demirkan A,
- 780 Le Roy CI, Raygoza Garay JA, Finnicum CT, Liu X, Zhernakova DV, Bonder MJ,
- 781 Hansen TH, Frost F, Rühlemann MC, Turpin W, Moon J-Y, Kim H-N, Lüll K, Barkan E,
- 782 Shah SA, Fornage M, Szopinska-Tokov J, Wallen ZD, Borisevich D, Agreus L,
- Andreasson A, Bang C, Bedrani L, Bell JT, Bisgaard H, Boehnke M, Boomsma DI, Burk
- 784 RD, Claringbould A, Croitoru K, Davies GE, van Duijn CM, Duijts L, Falony G, Fu J, van
- der Graaf A, Hansen T, Homuth G, Hughes DA, Ijzerman RG, Jackson MA, Jaddoe
- 786 VWV, Joossens M, Jørgensen T, Keszthelyi D, Knight R, Laakso M, Laudes M, Launer
- 787 LJ, Lieb W, Lusis AJ, Masclee AAM, Moll HA, Mujagic Z, Qibin Q, Rothschild D, Shin H,
- 788 Sørensen SJ, Steves CJ, Thorsen J, Timpson NJ, Tito RY, Vieira-Silva S, Völker U,
- 789 Völzke H, Võsa U, Wade KH, Walter S, Watanabe K, Weiss S, Weiss FU, Weissbrod O,
- 790 Westra H-J, Willemsen G, Payami H, Jonkers DMAE, Vasquez AA, de Geus EJC,
- 791 Meyer KA, Stokholm J, Segal E, Org E, Wijmenga C, Kim H-L, Kaplan RC, Spector TD,
- 792 Uitterlinden AG, Rivadeneira F, Franke A, Lerch MM, Franke L, Sanna S, D'Amato M,
- 793 Pedersen O, Paterson AD, Kraaij R, Raes J, Zhernakova A. 2020. Genetics of human
- gut microbiome composition. biorxiv;2020.06.26.173724v1. Genetics. bioRxiv.
- 68. Roehe R, Dewhurst RJ, Duthie C-A, Rooke JA, McKain N, Ross DW, Hyslop JJ,
- 796 Waterhouse A, Freeman TC, Watson M, Wallace RJ. 2016. Bovine Host Genetic
- 797 Variation Influences Rumen Microbial Methane Production with Best Selection Criterion
- for Low Methane Emitting and Efficiently Feed Converting Hosts Based on

799 Metagenomic Gene Abundance. PLoS Genet 12:e1005846.

- 800 69. Difford GF, Plichta DR, Løvendahl P, Lassen J, Noel SJ, Højberg O, Wright A-DG, Zhu
- Z, Kristensen L, Nielsen HB, Guldbrandtsen B, Sahana G. 2018. Host genetics and the
- 802 rumen microbiome jointly associate with methane emissions in dairy cows. PLoS Genet

803 14:e1007580.

- 804 70. Hania WB, Ballet N, Vandeckerkove P, Ollivier B, O'Toole PW, Brugère J-F. 2017.
- 805 Archaebiotics: Archaea as Pharmabiotics for Treating Chronic Disease in Humans?, p.
- 806 42–62. In Sghaier, H, Najjari, A, Ghedira, K (eds.), Archaea New Biocatalysts, Novel

807 Pharmaceuticals and Various Biotechnological Applications. InTech.

808 71. Douglas AE. 2020. The microbial exometabolome: ecological resource and architect of
 809 microbial communities. Philos Trans R Soc Lond B Biol Sci 375:20190250.

Figure and table legends 810

811 Figure legends

- 812 Figure 1. The order Methanomassiliicoccales forms two large clades that
- 813 loosely follow the source of isolation. A maximum likelihood phylogeny of
- 814 concatenated single-copy marker genes. The gray triangle corresponds to
- 815 Thermoplasma acidophilum, Picrophilus oshimae, Ferroplasma acidarmanus,
- 816 Acidiplasma aeolicum and Cuniculiplasma divulgatum; outgroup taxa from class
- 817 Thermoplasmata. Black circles indicate bootstrap values of > 80 (of 100 bootstrap
- 818 permutations), and branch color represents the clade. Colored strips show the
- 819 source of isolation of each of the included genomes and the general category to
- 820 which the source belongs. Bar plots show the genome abundance enrichment in gut
- 821 metagenome samples compared to environmental samples calculated using
- 822 DESeq2; dots indicate taxa with significant enrichment in either host or
- 823 environmental biome (Adj. P < 0.05). The scale bar represents the number of amino
- 824 acid substitutions per site.
- 825

826 Figure 2. Methanomassiliicoccales clades are widespread but not abundant

827 across a range of environments and animal hosts. Combined abundance of 828 representative genomes of the EX (purple), FL (green), HA (orange) clades on 829 metagenome samples from diverse biomes: stomach (n = 12), foregut (23), large 830

intestine (66), fecal (44), desert (4), sand (12), grasslands (8), permafrost (22),

831 sediment (31), coastal (28), intertidal zone (25), lentic (6), groundwater (3), saline 832 (2), hypersaline (9) and Ice (10). Abundances calculated for individual genomes 833 using KrakenUnig and aggregated by clade. Y-axis in logarithmic scale, black points 834 indicate mean relative abundance in percentage, black bars indicate standard 835 deviation. 836 837 Figure 3. Genome characteristics and adhesion protein repertoire of Methanomassiliicoccales reflect division of the order into clades, although 838 839 members of the Clade FL not enriched in environmental biomes resemble 840 those of the Clade HA. The phylogeny is the same as shown in Figure 1. The 841 colored strip summarizes the biome enrichment analysis. Heatmaps show genome 842 features including genome GC content (GC; range: 41.26 %, 62.74 %), genome length (Len; 969.311 bp, 2.620.233 bp), and number of predicted genes (Genes: 843 844 1057, 2607) (blue scale); or repertoire of adhesion proteins: Sel1 containing proteins 845 (Sel1; 0, 29), Listeria-Bacteroides repeat containing proteins (List-Bact; 0, 26), 846 tetratricopeptide repeats (TPR; 7, 40), Ankyrin repeats (ANK; 0, 3), Leucine-rich 847 repeats (LRR: 0, 9), Fibronectin type III (FN3: 0, 20) domains, Bacterial Ig-like 848 domains (Ig-like; 0, 12), YadA-like domain (YadA; 0, 1) and adhesin-like proteins 849 (ALP; 0, 12) (gray scale; columns ordered by hierarchical clustering). On both heatmaps the color intensity of each feature is relative to the maximum value of each 850 851 category. Scale bar represent the number of amino acid substitutions per site.

bioRxiv preprint doi: https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.09.17.302828; this version posted September 18, 2020. The copyright holder for this preprint (which was not certified by peer review) is the author/funder, who has granted bioRxiv a license to display the preprint in perpetuity. It is made available under aCC-BY-NC 4.0 International license.

852

853	Figure 4. Ordination of gene content of Methanomassiliicoccales group taxa by
854	phylogenetic clade rather than by biome enrichment. Principal component
855	analysis of the gene cluster presence of taxa from clades FL (green), HA (orange)
856	and EX (purple). Highlighted points correspond to outliers: taxa either not
857	significantly enriched in environmental or gut biomes, or with enrichment opposite to
858	the expectation given their clade.
859	
860	Figure 5. Members of <i>Methanomassiliicoccales</i> are rare members of the human
861	gut microbiota. Scatter plots of the genera A) ca. Methanomethylophilus and B)
862	Methanomassiliicoccus show that their prevalence and mean abundance is low
863	across most studies and populations (n = 4472; 35 datasets) with subjects from
864	Australia (AUT), China (CHN), Denmark (DNK), Ethiopia (ETH), Fijo (FJI), Great
865	Britain (GBR), Ghana (GHA), Israel (ISR), Madagascar (MDG), Mongolia (MNG),
866	The Netherlands (NDL), El Salvador (SLV), Sweden (SWE), Tanzania (TZA) and the
867	United States (USA).
868	
869	Figure 6. Coabundance networks of <i>Methanomassiliicoccus</i> (green node, dark
870	edges) and " <i>ca.</i> Methanomethylophilus" (orange node, light edges) in the
871	human gut largely overlap. Both Methanomassiliicoccales genera are significantly
872	co-abundant (cyan edge). Their abundances are also coordinated with another

archaeon (blue node) and TMA-producing bacterial taxa (red nodes).

874

875 Table legends

- 876 **Table 1.** InterPro, eggNOG and Prokka annotations of gene clusters significantly
- 877 enriched on clade HA compared to Clade FL. Four gene clusters with no annotation
- 878 were omitted.
- 879
- 880 Supplementary figure legends

881 Figure S1. *Methanomassiliicoccales* taxa from all clades are widespread but

882 not abundant across a range of environments and animal hosts. The

- abundance of members of the FL and HA clades is comparable within similar
- biomes, in particular, animal derived metagenomes. Abundance of each
- 885 representative genome on diverse metagenome and environmental metagenome
- samples colored by clade (FL: green, HA: orange, EX: purple). Abundances
- 887 calculated for individual genomes using KrakenUniq and aggregated by clade. Note
- that the Y-axis is in logarithmic scale and each plot has a different scale. Black
- 889 points indicate mean relative abundance in percentage, black bars indicate standard
- 890 deviation. Metagenome samples from stomach (n=12), foregut (23), large intestine
- (66), fecal (44), desert (4), sand (12), grasslands (8), permafrost (22), sediment (31),
- coastal (28), intertidal zone (25), lentic (6), groundwater (3), saline (2), hypersaline
- 893 (9) and Ice (10).

bioRxiv preprint doi: https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.09.17.302828; this version posted September 18, 2020. The copyright holder for this preprint (which was not certified by peer review) is the author/funder, who has granted bioRxiv a license to display the preprint in perpetuity. It is made available under aCC-BY-NC 4.0 International license.

895	Figure S2. Small clusters of unknown function dominate the pangenome of the
896	order Methanomassiliicoccales. Gene cluster frequency spectrum of the order
897	Methanomassiliicoccales separated by (A) unknown or (B) known function. (C)
898	Fraction of gene clusters belonging to each COG category per clade. Core clusters
899	were defined as present in \ge 80% of genomes of a clade; for the complete order,
900	gene clusters were present in \ge 80% of the included genomes and at least one
901	member of each clade. The proportion of clusters of unknown functions in the core
902	genome of each clade was large and varied between clades, ranging from 23.0 % in
903	Clade HA to 38.5 % in Clade EX. The proportion of unknown clusters was lowest in
904	the complete taxonomic order, where it only accounted for 14.7 % of gene clusters.
905	COG functional classification descriptions by groups. Information Storage and
906	processing: (B) Chromatin structure and dynamic, (J) Translation, ribosomal
907	structure and biogenesis, (K) Transcription, (L) Replication, recombination and
908	repair. Cellular processes and signaling: (D) Cell cycle control, cell division,
909	chromosome partitioning, (M) Cell wall/membrane/envelope biogenesis, (N) Cell
910	motility, (O) Post translational modification, protein turnover, chaperone, (T) Signal
911	transduction mechanisms, (U) Intracellular trafficking, secretion, and vesicular,
912	transport, (V) Defense mechanisms, (Z) Cytoskeleton. Metabolism: (C) Energy
913	production and conversion, (E) Amino acid transport and metabolism, (F) Nucleotide
914	transport and metabolism, (G) Carbohydrate transport and metabolism, (H)

915	Coenzyme transport and metabolism,	(I)	Lipid transport and metabolism, (F)
-----	------------------------------------	-----	------------------------------------	---

- 916 Inorganic ion transport and metabolism, (Q) Secondary metabolites biosynthesis,
- 917 transport and catabolism. Poorly characterized: (X) No annotation retrieved, (S)
- 918 Function unknown.
- 919

920 Supplementary table legends

- 921 **Table S1.** CBI assembly accession, genome characteristics, study information and
- 922 source of isolation of 71 publicly available genomes from the order
- 923 Methanomassiliicoccales retrieved from NCBI in June 2018, plus the ca. M. alvus
- 924 MAG here reported. Study accession and title of UBA genomes obtained from
- 925 supplementary tables of Parks et al., 2017 (doi: 10.1038/s41564-017-0012-7),
- 926 otherwise, obtained from NCBI bioproject.
- 927
- 928 **Table S2.** SRA and MGnify accession information of publicly available metagenome
- 929 samples from gastrointestinal and environmental biomes
- 930
- **Table S3.** SRA, study and country information of publicly available human gut
- 932 metagenome samples
- 933

Table S4. Prevalence and mean abundance of candidatus Methanomethylophilus

935 and Methanomassiliicoccus across multiple human populations.

bioRxiv preprint doi: https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.09.17.302828; this version posted September 18, 2020. The copyright holder for this preprint (which was not certified by peer review) is the author/funder, who has granted bioRxiv a license to display the preprint in perpetuity. It is made available under aCC-BY-NC 4.0 International license.

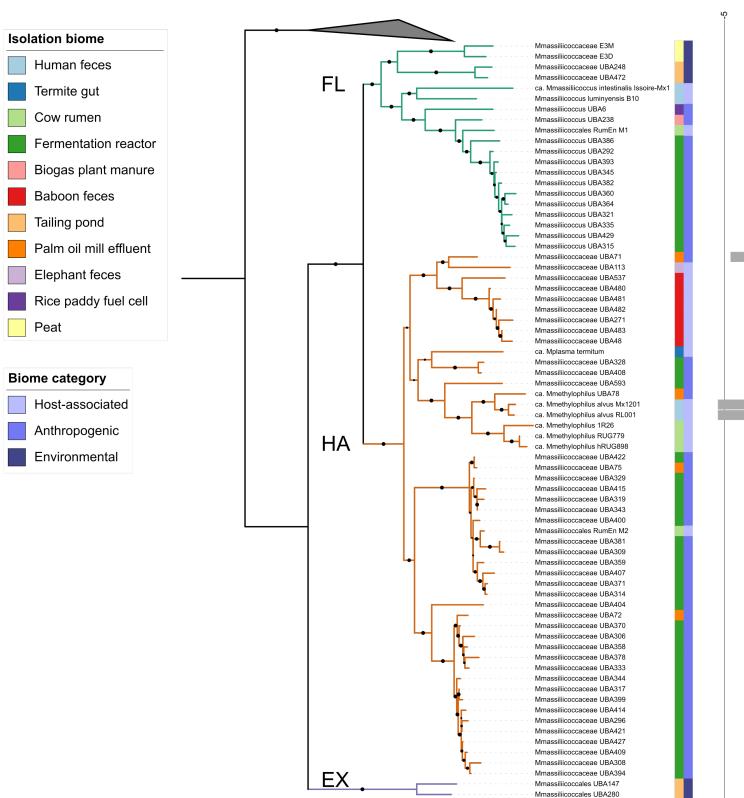
936

- 937 Table S5. Intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC) of and FRD-adjusted P values of
- 938 relative abundances Methanomassiliicoccus and other control taxa on monozygotic
- 939 and dizygotic twins

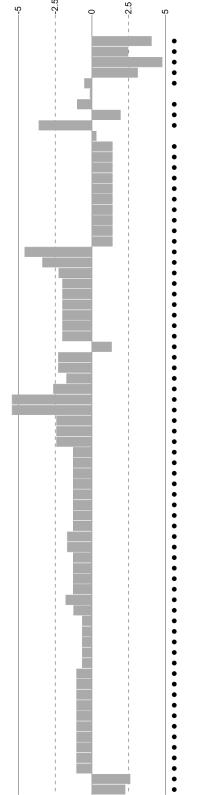
940

941

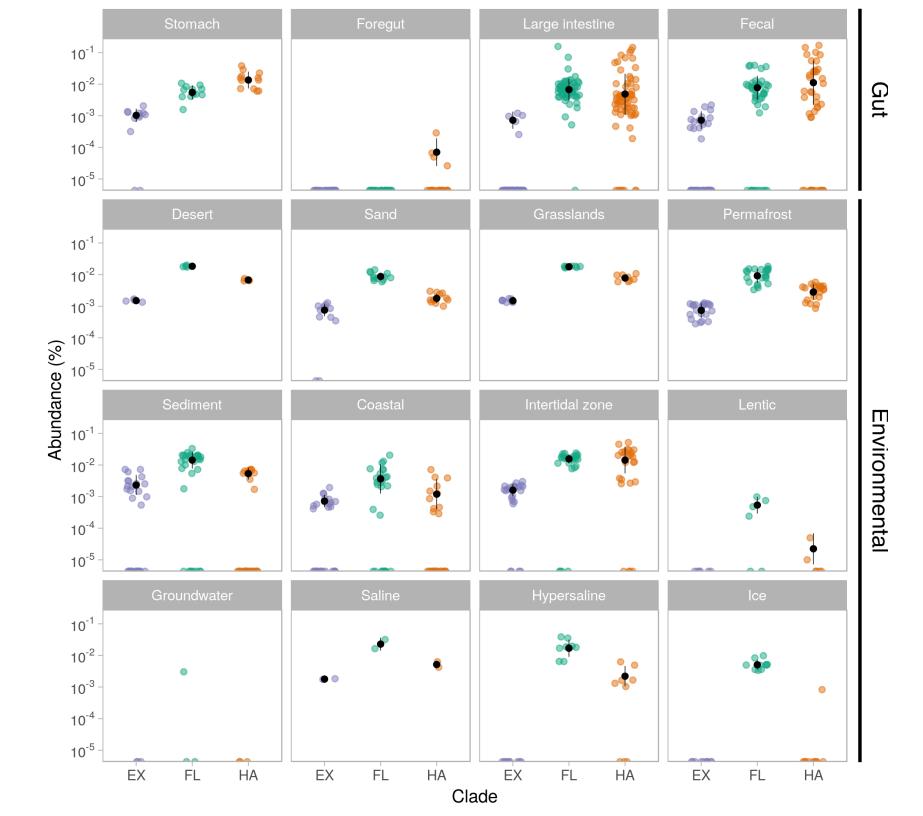


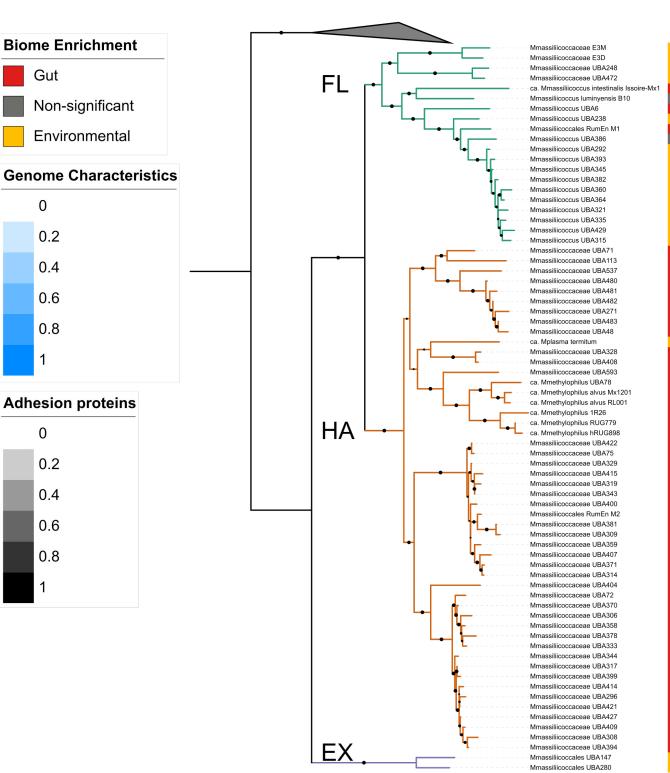


Environment-enriched

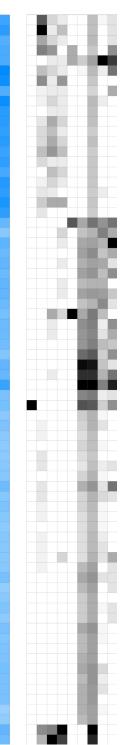


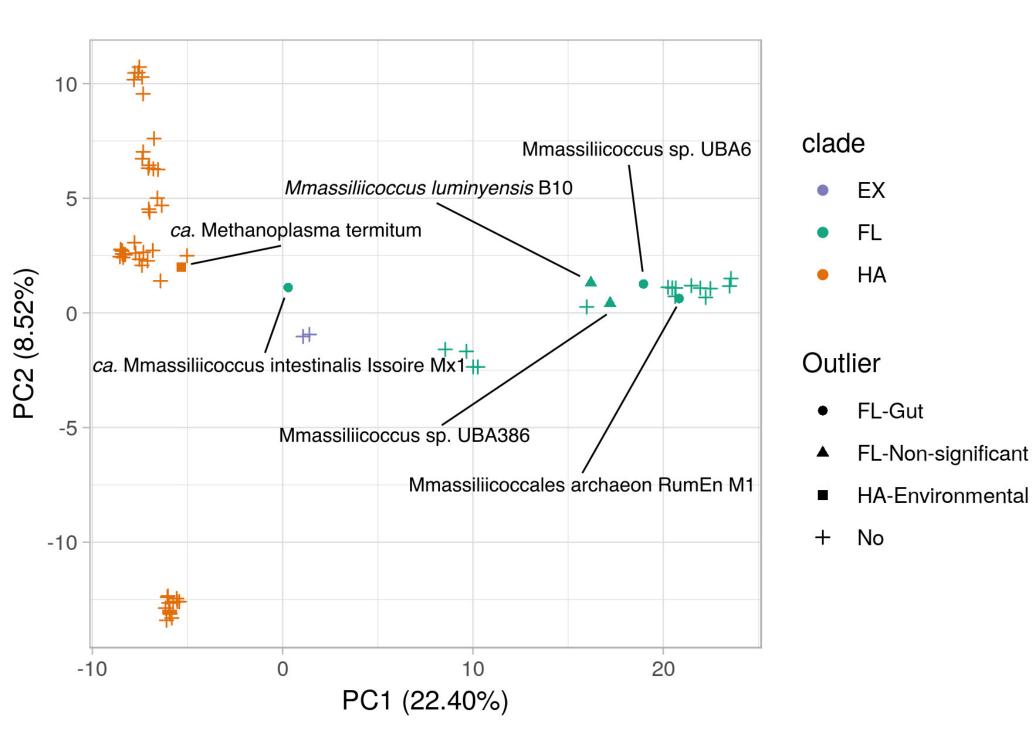
Host-enriched

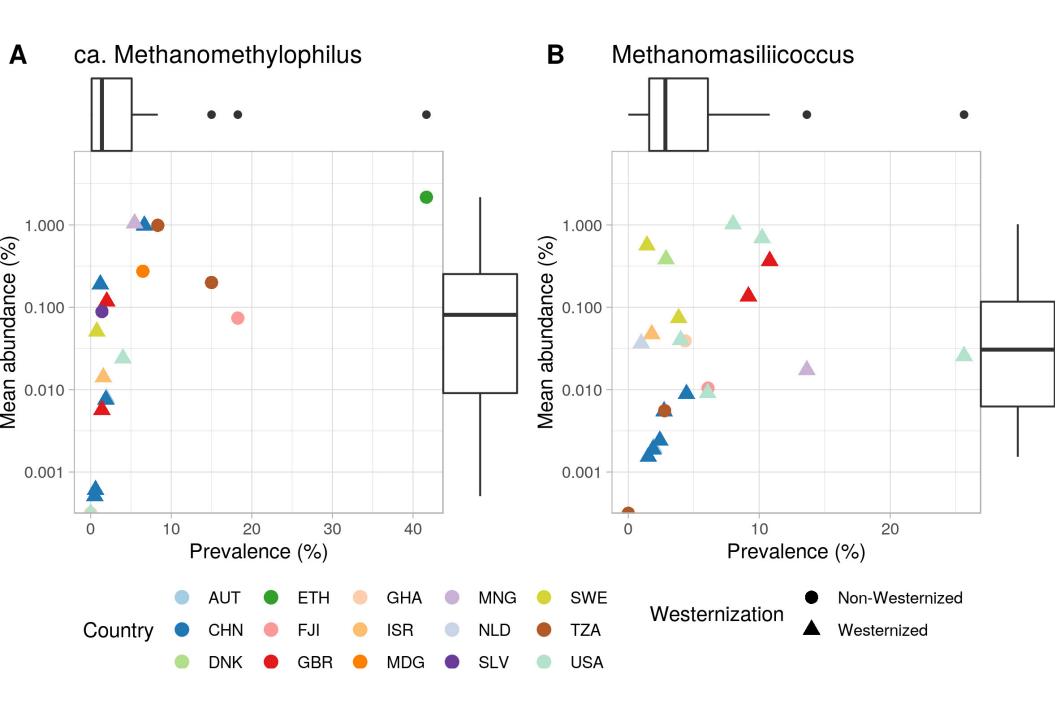


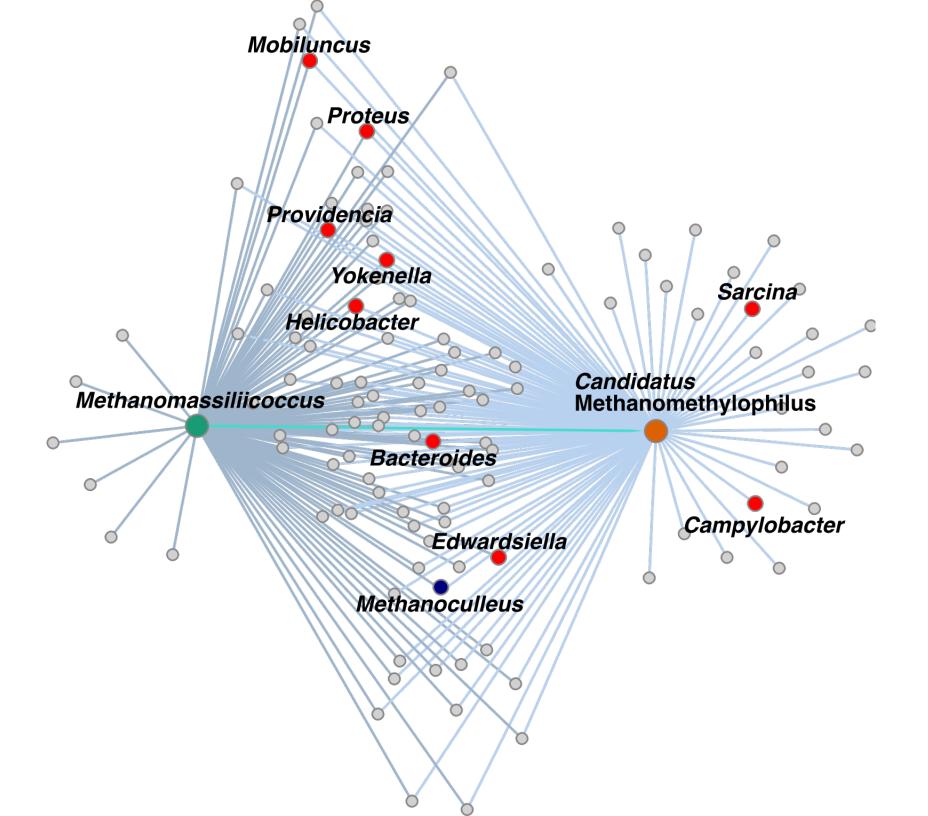












Interpro accession	Interpro annotation	NOG accession	COG category	Prokka gene name	Prokka annotation
IPR001086	Prephenate dehydratase	COG0077@NOG	E	pheA	Prephenate dehydratase
IPR002657	Bile acid:sodium symporter/arsenical resistance protein Acr3	COG0385@NOG	s	-	hypothetical protein
IPR002701	Chorismate mutase II, prokaryotic-type	COG1605@NOG	E	aroQ	Chorismate mutase
IPR002732	Holliday junction resolvase Hjc	COG1591@NOG	L	rutD	Putative aminoacrylate hydrolase RutD
IPR003761	Exonuclease VII, small subunit	COG1722@NOG	L	xseB	Exodeoxyribonuc lease 7 small subunit
IPR006357	HAD-superfamily hydrolase, subfamily IIA	COG0647@NOG	G	gph	Glyceraldehyde 3-phosphate phosphatase
IPR013022	Xylose isomerase-like, TIM barrel domain	11IHC@NOG	L	-	hypothetical protein
IPR015867	Nitrogen regulatory protein PII/ATP phosphoribosyltransferas e, C-terminal	COG3323@NOG	S	-	hypothetical protein
IPR019271	Protein of unknown function DUF2284, metal- binding	11RTN@NOG	s	-	hypothetical protein
IPR029068	Glyoxalase/Bleomycin resistance protein/Dihydroxybiphenyl dioxygenase	-	x	-	hypothetical protein