Author's response to reviews

Title: Molecular epidemiology of tuberculosis in Sicily, Italy: what has changed after a decade?

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Point-to-point response

* Please clarify within the methods section whether these isolates were collected as part of standard patient care and if any ethical approval was required for their use.

This has been addressed and a specific paragraph has been added in the Methods section (lines 152-155, highlighted in grey)

* In response to the remaining comments of Reviewer 1 ("the manuscript has improved a lot since the last version although I feel that some statements needs to be made more carefully. Particularly in the comparison to the years 1994-2000 when comparing the number of lineages (277-282). Given that you have only 6 foreign born patients in that study period while 42 in the more recent study period, your comparison is very skewed and these interpretations could not be made.") we feel that acknowledgment of this and clarification needs to be made around these statement (i.e. at lines 277 etc).

This has been acknowledged. Two sentences have been added about this issue in the limitations of the study (lines 339-334, highlighted in grey). It is undoubtedly true, the composition of the two set of patients is very different, but this is so because of the changing epidemiological pattern of TB in Sicily.