


Measurement of the Time-Integrated CP Asymmetry in $D^0 \rightarrow K^- K^+$ Decays

R. Aaij *et al.**
(LHCb Collaboration)

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The time-integrated CP asymmetry in the Cabibbo-suppressed decay $D^0 \rightarrow K^- K^+$ is measured using proton-proton collision data, corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 5.7 fb^{-1} collected at a center-of-mass energy of 13 TeV with the LHCb detector. The D^0 mesons are required to originate from promptly produced $D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0 \pi^+$ decays, and the charge of the companion pion is used to determine the flavor of the charm meson at production. The time-integrated CP asymmetry is measured to be $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^- K^+) = [6.8 \pm 5.4 \pm 1.6] \times 10^{-4}$ where the first uncertainty is statistical and the second systematic. The direct CP asymmetries in $D^0 \rightarrow K^- K^+$ and $D^0 \rightarrow \pi^- \pi^+$ decays, $a_{K^- K^+}^d$ and $a_{\pi^- \pi^+}^d$, are derived by combining $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^- K^+)$ with the time-integrated CP asymmetry difference, $\Delta \mathcal{A}_{CP} = \mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^- K^+) - \mathcal{A}_{CP}(\pi^- \pi^+)$, and other inputs, giving $a_{K^- K^+}^d = (7.7 \pm 5.7) \times 10^{-4}$, $a_{\pi^- \pi^+}^d = (23.2 \pm 6.1) \times 10^{-4}$, with a correlation coefficient corresponding to $\rho = 0.88$. The compatibility of these results with CP symmetry is 1.4 and 3.8 standard deviations for $D^0 \rightarrow K^- K^+$ and $D^0 \rightarrow \pi^- \pi^+$ decays, respectively. This is the first evidence for direct CP violation in a specific D^0 decay.

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One of the three necessary conditions for baryon asymmetry in the Universe is the noninvariance of the fundamental interactions under the simultaneous transformation of the charge conjugation (C) and parity (P) operators, referred to as CP violation [1]. The Cabibbo-Kobayashi-Maskawa formalism describes CP violation in the standard model (SM) of particle physics [2,3] through an irreducible phase in the quark-mixing matrix. Over the past sixty years, CP violation has been observed in the K , D , and B -meson systems by several experiments [4–13]. In the charm quark sector, the recent observation of CP violation [13] stimulates a wide discussion to understand its nature. Further precise measurements may resolve the intricate theoretical debate on whether the observed value is consistent with the SM [14–29]. The discovery measurement of CP violation in neutral charm meson decays used the difference between two time-integrated CP -violating asymmetries of Cabibbo-suppressed D^0 decays, $\Delta \mathcal{A}_{CP} = \mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^- K^+) - \mathcal{A}_{CP}(\pi^- \pi^+)$, found to be $\Delta \mathcal{A}_{CP} = (-15.4 \pm 2.9) \times 10^{-4}$ [13]. The time-integrated CP asymmetry for $f = K^- K^+$ and $f = \pi^- \pi^+$ corresponds to

$$\mathcal{A}_{CP}(f) \equiv \frac{\int dt \epsilon(t) [\Gamma(D^0 \rightarrow f)(t) - \Gamma(\bar{D}^0 \rightarrow f)(t)]}{\int dt \epsilon(t) [\Gamma(D^0 \rightarrow f)(t) + \Gamma(\bar{D}^0 \rightarrow f)(t)]}, \quad (1)$$

*Full author list given at the end of the Letter.

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where $\epsilon(t)$ is the reconstruction efficiency as a function of the D^0 decay time and Γ denotes the decay rate. This Letter presents measurements of the time-integrated CP asymmetries in $D^0 \rightarrow K^- K^+$ decays. Combining the measurements of $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^- K^+)$ and $\Delta \mathcal{A}_{CP}$, it is possible to quantify the amount of CP violation in the decay amplitude for $D^0 \rightarrow K^- K^+$ and $D^0 \rightarrow \pi^- \pi^+$ decays and provide important insight in the breaking of U -spin symmetry. The mixing in the neutral charm system implies that $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(f)$ is the sum of a component related to the CP violation in the decay amplitude a_f^d , and a component related to D^0 - \bar{D}^0 mixing and the interference between mixing and decay, ΔY_f . Up to first order in the D^0 mixing parameters [30–37], the time-integrated CP asymmetry can be written as

$$\mathcal{A}_{CP}(f) \approx a_f^d + \frac{\langle t \rangle_f}{\tau_D} \Delta Y_f, \quad (2)$$

where $\langle t \rangle_f$ is the mean decay time of the D^0 mesons in the experimental data sample and τ_D is the D^0 lifetime [38,39].

The neutral charm mesons considered are produced in the strong-interaction decays $D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0 \pi^+$ from D^{*+} mesons created in proton-proton (pp) interactions. The charge of the accompanying “tagging” pion (π_{tag}^+) is used to identify the flavor of the D^0 meson at production. Throughout this Letter, the inclusion of charge conjugation decay modes is implied, except in the definition of the asymmetries, and D^{*+} and ϕ indicate the $D^*(2010)^+$ and $\phi(1020)$ mesons, respectively. The measured asymmetry, $A(K^- K^+)$, is defined as

$$A(K^- K^+) \equiv \frac{N(D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0 \pi^+) - N(D^{*-} \rightarrow \bar{D}^0 \pi^-)}{N(D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0 \pi^+) + N(D^{*-} \rightarrow \bar{D}^0 \pi^-)}, \quad (3)$$

where N denotes the observed signal yield in the data, and the D^0 meson decays into K^-K^+ . This asymmetry can be approximated as

$$A(K^-K^+) \approx \mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+) + A_P(D^{*+}) + A_D(\pi_{\text{tag}}^+), \quad (4)$$

where $A_P(D^{*+})$ is the production asymmetry arising from the different hadronization probabilities between D^{*+} and D^{*-} mesons in pp collisions, and $A_D(\pi_{\text{tag}}^+)$ is the instrumental asymmetry due to different reconstruction efficiencies of positive and negative tagging pions. The contributions from the production and instrumental asymmetries, referred to as nuisance asymmetries, are estimated and removed through two calibration procedures denoted as C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$, using a set of promptly produced D^+ and D_s^+ meson decays. Namely, the C_{D^+} procedure uses $D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0(\rightarrow K^-\pi^+)\pi^+$, $D^+ \rightarrow K^-\pi^+\pi^+$, and $D^+ \rightarrow \bar{K}^0\pi^+$ decays, while the $C_{D_s^+}$ procedure uses $D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0(\rightarrow K^-\pi^+)\pi^+$, $D_s^+ \rightarrow \phi(\rightarrow K^-K^+)\pi^+$, and $D_s^+ \rightarrow \bar{K}^0K^+$ decays. To avoid statistical overlap, the sample of $D^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+$ decays is randomly split in two, and the two halves are used separately for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ calibration procedures. All these decays are Cabibbo favored; therefore their CP asymmetries are assumed to be negligible. In analogy to Eq. (4), the corresponding measured asymmetries in the calibration decays are decomposed as

$$\begin{aligned} A(K^-\pi^+) &\approx A_P(D^{*+}) - A_D(K^+) + A_D(\pi^+) + A_D(\pi_{\text{tag}}^+), \\ A(K^-\pi^+\pi^+) &\approx A_P(D^+) - A_D(K^+) + A_D(\pi_1^+) + A_D(\pi_2^+), \\ A(\bar{K}^0\pi^+) &\approx A_P(D^+) + A(\bar{K}^0) + A_D(\pi^+), \\ A(\phi\pi^+) &\approx A_P(D_s^+) + A_D(\pi^+), \\ A(\bar{K}^0K^+) &\approx A_P(D_s^+) + A(\bar{K}^0) + A_D(K^+). \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

In the equations above, $A_D(K^+)$ is the kaon instrumental asymmetry, $A_P(D_{(s)}^+)$ is the $D_{(s)}^+$ meson production asymmetry, and $A(\bar{K}^0)$ is the asymmetry arising from the combined effect of CP violation and mixing in the neutral kaon system and the different interaction rates of \bar{K}^0 and K^0 with the detector material. The asymmetries $A_D(\pi_1^+)$ and $A_D(\pi_2^+)$ are related to the two pions in the $D^+ \rightarrow K^-\pi^+\pi^+$ decay, distinguished by the online selection criteria. In $A(\phi\pi^+)$, the asymmetry from the oppositely charged kaons is not included as it is estimated to be negligible. With the individual terms of $\mathcal{O}(10^{-2})$ or less [40–43], the approximations in Eqs. (4) and (5) are valid up to corrections of $\mathcal{O}(10^{-6})$. The individual nuisance asymmetries depend on the kinematics of the corresponding particles. After accounting for this kinematic dependence, the time-integrated CP asymmetry, $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$, is obtained for each of the two calibration procedures

individually, by combining the measured asymmetries as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} C_{D^+} : \mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+) &= A(K^-K^+) - A(K^-\pi^+) \\ &\quad + A(K^-\pi^+\pi^+) - A(\bar{K}^0\pi^+) + A(\bar{K}^0), \\ C_{D_s^+} : \mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+) &= A(K^-K^+) - A(K^-\pi^+) \\ &\quad + A(\phi\pi^+) - A(\bar{K}^0K^+) + A(\bar{K}^0). \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

The asymmetries are measured in pp collision data, collected with the LHCb detector at a center-of-mass energy of 13 TeV, corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 5.7 fb^{-1} . The LHCb detector is a single-arm forward spectrometer designed for the study of particles containing b or c quarks [44,45]. A high-precision tracking system with a dipole magnet and vertex detector measures the momentum (p) and impact parameter (IP) of charged particles. The IP is defined as the distance of closest approach between the reconstructed trajectory and a pp interaction vertex [46]. The IP is used to distinguish between particles produced in the primary collisions and those produced in heavy-flavor decays. Different species of charged hadrons are distinguished using particle identification (PID) information from two ring-imaging Cherenkov detectors, an electromagnetic and a hadronic calorimeter, and a muon detector.

The online event selection, the trigger, consists of a hardware stage followed by two software stages within which a near real-time alignment and calibration of the detector are performed [47]. In the hardware stage, events are selected based on calorimeter and muon detector information and are accepted independently of the charm decay of interest, reducing any related asymmetry to a negligible level. The subsequent first stage of the software trigger reconstructs the trajectories using information from the full LHCb tracking system and applies requirements on the transverse momentum (p_T), the IP, and the displacement from any primary vertex (PV) of the charm-meson decay products. To pass the selection, at least one charged particle or two particles forming a high-quality vertex must fulfill these criteria. The second stage of the software trigger exploits the full information from the tracking subdetectors and performs additional steps of the pattern recognition, including the reconstruction of neutral particles and PID. Further requirements on PID, kinematics, and the decay topology are then applied.

The $D_s^+ \rightarrow \phi\pi^+$ decays are selected from $D_s^+ \rightarrow K^-K^+\pi^+$ decay candidates requiring that the invariant mass of the kaon pair must be within $\pm 5 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ of the ϕ mass. Similarly, the \bar{K}^0 mesons, produced in $D^+ \rightarrow \bar{K}^0\pi^+$ and $D_s^+ \rightarrow \bar{K}^0K^+$ decays, are reconstructed using their decay to two pions, which is dominated by the K_S^0 state. The two pions are required to have an invariant mass within $\pm 10 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ of the K_S^0 mass and to form a vertex displaced

more than 20 mm along the beam direction from the $D_{(s)}^+$ -meson decay. The D^0 candidates are required to have a reconstructed invariant mass between 1844 and 1887 MeV/c^2 .

An off-line selection is applied to reduce background, including combinations of random tracks and tracks from other c hadron decays, and to ensure a further cancellation of nuisance asymmetries which can depend on the kinematics of the charm mesons, the kaons, and the pions. These kinematics and PID requirements are applied to both the signal and related control modes where applicable. To improve the overall precision, these selections have been optimized independently for each of the two calibration sets C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$. A requirement on the IP of the charm hadron suppresses charm mesons from b hadron decays to a fraction between 2% and 6% in all decay modes. To improve the resolution on the track momenta and the charm meson decay length and invariant mass, a global decay-chain fit [48] is performed, constraining the origin vertex of the charm meson to the position of the nearest primary vertex and the invariant mass of the two pion system to the known K_S^0 mass [49].

In the construction of the D^{*+} candidate, requirements are imposed on the tagging pion to exclude kinematic regions which show a large asymmetry in $A_D(\pi_{\text{tag}}^+)$ [50]. The invariant mass of the D^{*+} , $m(D^0\pi^+)$, calculated using the vector sum of the momenta of the three charged particles and the known D^0 and π^+ masses [49], is required to be between 2004.5 and 2020 MeV/c^2 . For events that contain multiple D^{*+} candidates, one candidate is retained randomly.

The nuisance asymmetries introduced in Eqs. (4) and (5) are expected to depend on the kinematics of the individual particles. To ensure a proper cancellation of those asymmetries, per-candidate weights are applied to all the data samples to equalize the kinematics of D^{*+} , D^+ , and D_s^+ mesons and the kaons and pions, as shown in the Supplemental Material [51]. The values of the weights are calculated separately for each calibration procedure using an iterative technique. It is verified that the background-subtracted, weighted distributions of the components of momenta of the relevant particles agree among the different decays. The weighting procedure is repeated for each data-taking year and magnet polarity to account for the dependence of the nuisance asymmetries on data-taking conditions.

The measured asymmetries of signal components for each decay mode are determined through least-square fits to the weighted, binned mass distributions of the charm-meson candidates, simultaneously for both flavors, as shown in the Supplemental Material [51]. The signal models consist of a sum of Gaussian and Johnson S_U functions [59], empirically describing the experimental resolution and the energy loss due to final-state radiation.

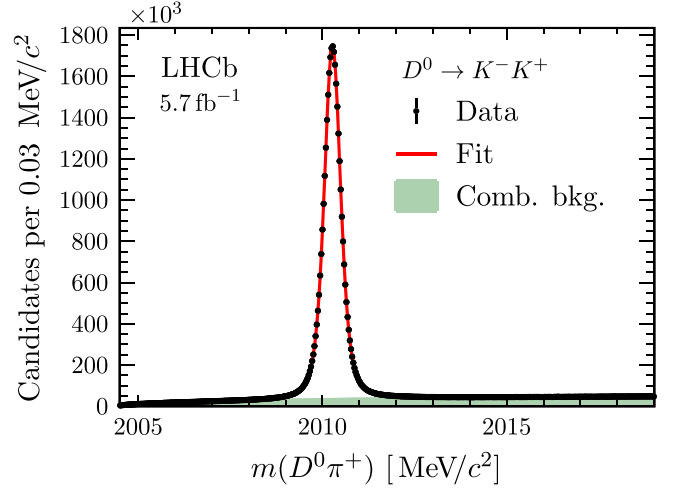


FIG. 1. Distribution of the invariant mass for the weighted $D^{*+} \rightarrow D^0(\rightarrow K^-K^+)\pi^+$ decay candidates, from the C_{D^+} calibration procedure. The result of the fit to this distribution is also shown.

The means of the signal distributions are distinct for the two charm meson flavors, whereas all the other parameters, including the relative fractions among the various functions, are shared. For D^{*+} decays, the combinatorial background is described by an empirical function of the form $[m(D^0\pi^+) - m(D^0) - m(\pi^+)]^\alpha e^{\beta m(D^0\pi^+)}$, where α and β are two parameters shared between the two flavors. In the other cases, an exponential function with a distinct parameter for positive and negative particles is used.

Figure 1 presents the distribution of the $D^0 \rightarrow K^-K^+$ invariant mass and the result of the fit. The signal yields, together with the statistical reduction factor, defined as $(\sum_{i=1}^{i=K} w_i)^2 / (N \cdot \sum_{i=1}^{i=K} w_i^2)$, where K is the total number of candidates and w_i includes background subtraction and kinematic weights, are reported in Table I. These reduction factors are for illustrative purposes only and indicate the hypothetical fraction of signal events that would provide the same statistical power as the weighted data sample.

Separate fits are performed to subsamples of data collected in different years and with different magnet

TABLE I. Signal yields and statistical reduction factors arising from the kinematic weighting of the sample for the various decay modes and both calibration procedures.

Decay mode	Signal yield [10^6]		Reduction factor	
	C_{D^+}	$C_{D_s^+}$	C_{D^+}	$C_{D_s^+}$
$D^0 \rightarrow K^-K^+$	37	37	0.72	0.76
$D^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+$	58	56	0.33	0.76
$D^+ \rightarrow K^-\pi^+\pi^+$	188	...	0.23	...
$D^+ \rightarrow \bar{K}^0\pi^+$	6	...	0.25	...
$D_s^+ \rightarrow \phi\pi^+$...	43	...	0.55
$D_s^+ \rightarrow \bar{K}^0K^+$...	5	...	0.70

polarities. After determining the asymmetries in these subsamples, the values of $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ are calculated according to Eq. (6), taking into account the contribution from the neutral kaon asymmetry. This is estimated by combining the LHCb material map from simulation with measured CP -violation and cross section parameters of the neutral kaon system [60–62], following the procedure described in Ref. [63]. The correction considers different \bar{K}^0 momentum spectra for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ calibration procedure and corresponds to $(-5.1 \pm 0.6) \times 10^{-4}$ and $(-8.5 \pm 1.3) \times 10^{-4}$, respectively. The uncertainties are evaluated with a model-independent strategy based on data and discussed later in the Letter. The individual $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ values per subsample are found to be in agreement, with a p value of 0.85 and 0.22 for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ methods, respectively. Finally, the measurements in each subsample are averaged to obtain the final result for each procedure.

Several sources of systematic uncertainties are considered. The systematic uncertainty related to the description of signal and background in the invariant-mass distributions is evaluated by generating pseudoexperiments according to the baseline fit models, and fitting alternative models to those samples. A fit-independent approach is also considered, based on a sideband subtraction. Systematic uncertainties of 1.1×10^{-4} and 1.0×10^{-4} are assigned for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ procedures, with a correlation of 0.05.

A systematic uncertainty associated to the presence of background components peaking in $m(D^0\pi)$ and not in $m(K^-K^+)$ is determined by fitting the latter distribution in the $D^0 \rightarrow K^-K^+$ samples, as shown in the Supplemental Material [51]. Various backgrounds are modeled using fast simulation [64]. The main sources are $D^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+\pi^0$ and $D^0 \rightarrow K^-e^+\nu_e$ decays. A similar study is performed on the $D^0 \rightarrow K^-\pi^+$ decay sample, where the peaking-background contributions are found to be negligible. As a result, the values 0.3×10^{-4} and 0.4×10^{-4} are assigned as systematic uncertainties for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ calibration procedures, respectively, with a correlation coefficient of 0.74.

Although suppressed by the stringent requirement on the IP, a fraction of D mesons from b hadron decays is still present in the final sample. As the different decay modes may have different levels of contamination, the value of $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ may be affected by an incomplete cancellation of the production asymmetries of b hadrons. The contributions from b hadron decays in data are estimated by fitting the IP distribution of charm mesons using shapes obtained from simulation. The corresponding systematic uncertainties are estimated to be 0.6×10^{-4} and 0.3×10^{-4} for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ calibration procedures, respectively, with a negligible correlation between them.

Any residual disagreement between the kinematic distributions among the various decay modes leads to an imperfect cancellation of the nuisance asymmetries.

The systematic uncertainties related to this effect are estimated to be 0.8×10^{-4} and 0.4×10^{-4} for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ procedures, respectively, with a negligible correlation.

To test the accuracy of the estimated value for $A(\bar{K}^0)$, a linear term with one free parameter is introduced in the model that describes the dependence of $A(\bar{K}^0)$ on the neutral-kaon decay time, as shown in the Supplemental Material [51]. The parameter is determined by fitting the charge asymmetry in $D^+ \rightarrow \bar{K}^0\pi^+$ decays as a function of the \bar{K}^0 decay time. This is done using a control sample where the neutral kaon decays outside the vertex detector. The parameter is found to be consistent with zero. Its uncertainty is propagated to the \bar{K}^0 lifetimes relevant for $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ and assigned as systematic uncertainty. The resulting, fully correlated, systematic uncertainties are 0.6×10^{-4} and 1.3×10^{-4} for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ procedures, respectively.

In the $C_{D_s^+}$ procedure, $D_s^+ \rightarrow K^-K^+\pi^+$ decay modes other than $D_s^+ \rightarrow \phi\pi^+$ may break the symmetry between the K^- and K^+ meson kinematic distributions. This leads to a bias in the measured asymmetry due to the momentum-dependent instrumental asymmetry of the kaon. This effect is estimated by combining the two momentum distributions with the expected charged-kaon asymmetry from simulation. The resulting systematic uncertainty is 1.0×10^{-4} .

All individual contributions are summed in quadrature to give the total systematic uncertainties of 1.6×10^{-4} and 2.0×10^{-4} for the C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$ procedures, respectively. A summary of all systematic uncertainties is shown in Table II.

Numerous additional checks are carried out, as shown in the Supplemental Material [51]. The measurements of $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ are verified to not depend on the decay time, the transverse momentum, and the pseudorapidity of the D^0 meson; the decay time and the pseudorapidity of the \bar{K}^0 meson; and the IP significance of the final-state particles with respect to all the PVs in the event of the control modes. The IP significance is defined as the difference between the χ^2 of the PV reconstructed with and without the considered

TABLE II. Systematic uncertainties on $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ for the two calibration procedures C_{D^+} and $C_{D_s^+}$. The total uncertainties are obtained as the sums in quadrature of the individual contributions. Correlations (Corr.) between the systematic uncertainties of the two calibration procedures are also reported.

Source	C_{D^+} [10^{-4}]	$C_{D_s^+}$ [10^{-4}]	Corr.
Fit model	1.1	1.0	0.05
Peaking backgrounds	0.3	0.4	0.74
Secondary decays	0.6	0.3	...
Kinematic weighting	0.8	0.4	...
Neutral kaon asymmetry	0.6	1.3	1.00
Charged kaon asymmetry	...	1.0	...
Total	1.6	2.0	0.28

particle. Furthermore, the total sample is split by different data-taking periods, also distinguishing different magnet polarities. Splitting into subsamples based on the trigger configuration is also considered. The p values under the hypothesis of no dependencies of $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ on the various variables are found to be uniformly distributed. Checks using alternative PID requirements and trigger selections are performed, and all variations of $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ are found to be compatible within statistical uncertainties. The resulting values for $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ for both calibration procedures are

$$C_{D^+}: \mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+) = [13.6 \pm 8.8(\text{stat}) \pm 1.6(\text{syst})] \times 10^{-4},$$

$$C_{D_s^+}: \mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+) = [2.8 \pm 6.7(\text{stat}) \pm 2.0(\text{syst})] \times 10^{-4},$$

with a statistical and systematic correlation of 0.05 and 0.28, respectively, corresponding to a total correlation of 0.06. The two results are in agreement within 1 standard deviation. Their average is

$$\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+) = [6.8 \pm 5.4(\text{stat}) \pm 1.6(\text{syst})] \times 10^{-4},$$

consistent with the previous results [51,52,63]. Assuming that CP is conserved in mixing and in the interference between decay and mixing, the comparison of the result reported here with the current world average [65] gives a compatibility of 1.3 standard deviations.

A combination of all the time-integrated CP asymmetries measured by the LHCb collaboration to date is performed, under the hypothesis that the time-dependent CP violation term in Eq. (2) is final-state independent, i.e., $\Delta Y_{K^-K^+} = \Delta Y_{\pi^-\pi^+} = \Delta Y$, as the final-state dependent contributions are estimated to be of the order of 10^{-5} [39]. The combination includes the previous LHCb measurements of $\mathcal{A}_{CP}(K^-K^+)$ [52,63] and ΔA_{CP} [13,50,63] as well as the current LHCb average of ΔY [39], the world average of the D^0 lifetime [49], and the values of reconstructed mean decay times for the $D^0 \rightarrow K^-K^+$ and $D^0 \rightarrow \pi^-\pi^+$ decays in the various analysis. The combination, obtained by minimizing a χ^2 function that includes all the measurements and their correlations, leads to

$$\begin{aligned} a_{K^-K^+}^d &= (7.7 \pm 5.7) \times 10^{-4}, \\ a_{\pi^-\pi^+}^d &= (23.2 \pm 6.1) \times 10^{-4}, \end{aligned}$$

where the uncertainties include systematic and statistical contributions with a correlation coefficient of 0.88. Figure 2 shows the central values and the confidence regions in the $(a_{K^-K^+}^d, a_{\pi^-\pi^+}^d)$ plane for this combination and the one realized with data collected between 2010 and 2012 [50,52,63,66,67]. The two combinations are based on an integrated luminosity of 8.7 fb^{-1} and 3.0 fb^{-1} , respectively.

The direct CP asymmetries deviate from zero by 1.4 and 3.8 standard deviations for $D^0 \rightarrow K^-K^+$ and $D^0 \rightarrow \pi^-\pi^+$

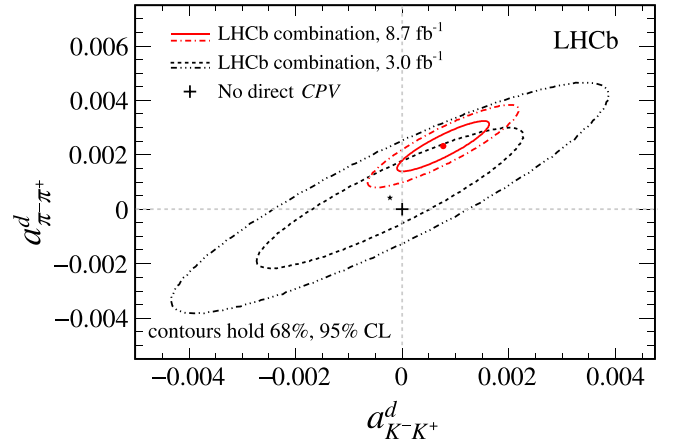


FIG. 2. Central values and two-dimensional confidence regions in the $(a_{K^-K^+}^d, a_{\pi^-\pi^+}^d)$ plane for the combinations of the LHCb results obtained with the dataset taken between 2010 and 2018 and the one taken between 2010 and 2012, corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 8.7 fb^{-1} and 3.0 fb^{-1} , respectively.

decays, respectively. This is the first evidence for direct CP violation in the $D^0 \rightarrow \pi^-\pi^+$ decay. U -spin symmetry implies $a_{K^-K^+}^d + a_{\pi^-\pi^+}^d = 0$ [68]. A value of $a_{K^-K^+}^d + a_{\pi^-\pi^+}^d = (30.8 \pm 11.4) \times 10^{-4}$ has been found, corresponding to a departure from U -spin symmetry of 2.7 standard deviations.

In summary, this Letter reports the most precise measurement of the time-integrated CP asymmetry in the $D^0 \rightarrow K^-K^+$ decay to date. A combination with the previous LHCb measurements shows the first evidence of direct CP asymmetry in an individual charm meson decay. These results will help to clarify the theoretical understanding of whether the observed CP violation in neutral charm meson decays is consistent with the SM, or an indication of the existence of new dynamics.

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T. Gershon⁵⁰, L. Giambastiani²⁸, V. Gibson⁴⁹, H. K. Giemza³⁶, A. L. Gilman⁵⁷, M. Giovannetti^{23,1}, A. Gioventù⁴⁰, P. Gironella Gironell³⁹, C. Giugliano^{21,d}, M. A. Giza³⁵, K. Gizdov⁵², E. L. Gkougkousis⁴², V. V. Gligorov^{13,42}, C. Göbel⁶⁴, E. Golobardes⁷⁶, D. Golubkov³⁸, A. Golutvin^{55,38}, A. Gomes^{1,1.2,a,m,n,m}, S. Gomez Fernandez³⁹, F. Goncalves Abrantes⁵⁷, M. Goncerz³⁵, G. Gong³, I. V. Gorelov³⁸, C. Gotti²⁶, J. P. Grabowski¹⁷, T. Grammatico¹³, L. A. Granado Cardoso⁴², E. Graugés³⁹, E. Graverini⁴³, G. Graziani⁶, A. T. Grecu³⁷, L. M. Greeven³², N. A. Grieser⁴, L. Grillo⁵³, S. Gromov³⁸, B. R. Gruberg Cazon⁵⁷, C. Gu³, M. Guarise^{21,d}, M. Guittiere¹¹, P. A. Günther¹⁷, E. Gushchin³⁸, A. Guth¹⁴, Y. Guz³⁸, T. Gys⁴², T. Hadavizadeh⁶³, G. Haefeli⁴³, C. Haen⁴², J. Haimberger⁴², S. C. Haines⁴⁹, T. Halewood-leagas⁵⁴, M. M. Halvorsen⁴², P. M. Hamilton⁶⁰, J. Hammerich⁵⁴, Q. Han⁷, X. Han¹⁷, E. B. Hansen⁵⁶, S. Hansmann-Menzemer^{17,42}, L. Hao⁶, N. Harnew⁵⁷, T. Harrison⁵⁴, C. Hasse⁴², M. Hatch⁴², J. He^{6,o}, K. Heijhoff³², K. Heinicke¹⁵, C. Henderson⁵⁹, R. D. L. Henderson^{63,50}, A. M. Hennequin⁵⁸, K. Hennessy⁵⁴, L. Henry⁴², J. Herd⁵⁵, J. Heuel¹⁴, A. Hicheur², D. Hill⁴³, M. Hilton⁵⁶, S. E. Hollitt¹⁵, J. Horswill⁵⁶, R. Hou⁷, Y. Hou⁸, J. Hu¹⁷, J. Hu⁶⁶, W. Hu⁵, X. Hu³, W. Huang⁶, X. Huang⁶⁸, W. Hulsbergen³², R. J. Hunter⁵⁰, M. Hushchyn³⁸, D. Hutchcroft⁵⁴, P. Ibis¹⁵, M. Idzik³⁴, D. Ilin³⁸, P. Ilten⁵⁹, A. Inglessi³⁸, A. Iniukhin³⁸, A. Ishteev³⁸, K. Ivshin³⁸, R. Jacobsson⁴², H. Jage¹⁴, S. J. Jaimes Elles⁴¹, S. Jakobsen⁴², E. Jans³², B. K. Jashal⁴¹, A. Jawahery⁶⁰, V. Jevtic¹⁵, E. Jiang⁶⁰, X. Jiang^{4,6}, Y. Jiang⁶, M. John⁵⁷, D. Johnson⁵⁸, C. R. Jones⁴⁹, T. P. Jones⁵⁰, B. Jost⁴², N. Jurik⁴², I. Juszcak³⁵, S. Kandybei⁴⁵, Y. Kang³, M. Karacson⁴², D. Karpenkov³⁸, M. Karpov³⁸, J. W. Kautz⁵⁹, F. Keizer⁴², D. M. Keller⁶², M. Kenzie⁵⁰, T. Ketel³², B. Khanji¹⁵, A. Kharisova³⁸, S. Kholodenko^{38,38}, G. Khreich¹¹, T. Kim¹⁴, V. S. Kirsebom⁴³, O. Kitouni⁵⁸, S. Klaver³³, N. Kleijne^{29,c}, K. Klimaszewski³⁶, M. R. Kmiec³⁶, S. Koliiev⁴⁶, A. Kondybayeva³⁸, A. Konoplyannikov³⁸, P. Kopciwicz³⁴, R. Kopecna¹⁷, P. Koppenburg³², M. Korolev³⁸, I. Kostiuk^{32,46}, O. Kot⁴⁶, S. Kotriakhova³⁸, A. Kozachuk³⁸, P. Kravchenko³⁸, L. Kravchuk³⁸, R. D. Krawczyk⁴², M. Kreps⁵⁰, S. Kretzschmar¹⁴, P. Krokovny^{38,38}, W. Krupa³⁴, W. Krzemien³⁶, J. Kubat¹⁷, S. Kubis⁷⁵, W. Kucewicz^{35,34}, M. Kucharczyk³⁵, V. Kudryavtsev^{38,38}, G. J. Kunde⁶¹, A. Kupsc⁷⁷, D. Lacarrere⁴², G. Lafferty⁵⁶, A. Lai²⁷, A. Lampis^{27,j}, D. Lancierini⁴⁴, C. Landesa Gomez⁴⁰, J. J. Lane⁵⁶, R. Lane⁴⁸, G. Lanfranchi²³, C. Langenbruch¹⁴, J. Langer¹⁵, O. Lantwin³⁸, T. Latham⁵⁰, F. Lazzari^{29,p}, M. Lazzaroni^{25,q}, R. Le Gac¹⁰, S. H. Lee⁷⁸, R. Lefèvre⁹, A. Leflat³⁸, S. Legotin³⁸, P. Lenisa^{21,d}, O. Leroy¹⁰, T. Lesiak³⁵, B. Leverington¹⁷, A. Li³, H. Li⁶⁶, K. Li⁷, P. Li¹⁷, P.-R. Li⁶⁷, S. Li⁷, T. Li⁶⁶, Y. Li⁴, Z. Li⁶², X. Liang⁶², C. Lin⁶, T. Lin⁵¹, R. Lindner⁴², V. Lisovskyi¹⁵, R. Litvinov^{27,j}, G. Liu⁶⁶, H. Liu⁶, Q. Liu⁶, S. Liu^{4,6}, A. Lobo Salvia³⁹, A. Loi²⁷, R. Lollini⁷², J. Lomba Castro⁴⁰, I. Longstaff⁵³, J. H. Lopes², A. Lopez Huertas³⁹, S. López Soliño⁴⁰, G. H. Lovell⁴⁹, Y. Lu^{4,r}, C. Lucarelli^{22,b}, D. Lucchesi^{28,s}, S. Luchuk³⁸, M. Lucio Martinez⁷⁴, V. Lukashenko^{32,46}, Y. Luo³, A. Lupato⁵⁶, E. Luppi^{21,d}, A. Lusiani^{29,c}, K. Lynch¹⁸, X.-R. Lyu⁶, L. Ma⁴, R. Ma⁶, S. Maccolini²⁰, F. Machefert¹¹, F. Maciuc³⁷, I. Mackay⁵⁷, V. Macko⁴³, P. Mackowiak¹⁵, L. R. Madhan Mohan⁴⁸, A. Maevskiy³⁸, D. Maisuzenko³⁸, M. W. Majewski³⁴, J. J. Malczewski³⁵, S. Malde⁵⁷, B. Malecki^{35,42}, A. Malinin³⁸, T. Maltsev^{38,38}, G. Manca^{27,j}, G. Mancinelli¹⁰, C. Mancuso^{11,25,q}, D. Manuzzi²⁰, C. A. Manzari⁴⁴, D. Marangotto^{25,q}, J. F. Marchand⁸, U. Marconi²⁰, S. Mariani^{22,b}, C. Marin Benito³⁹, J. Marks¹⁷, A. M. Marshall⁴⁸, P. J. Marshall⁵⁴, G. Martelli^{72,k}, G. Martellotti³⁰, L. Martinazzoli^{42,e}, M. Martinelli^{26,e}, D. Martinez Santos⁴⁰, F. Martinez Vidal⁴¹, A. Massafferri¹, M. Materok¹⁴, R. Matev⁴², A. Mathad⁴⁴, V. Matiunin³⁸, C. Matteuzzi²⁶, K. R. Mattioli¹², A. Mauri³², E. Maurice¹², J. Mauricio³⁹, M. Mazurek⁴², M. McCann⁵⁵, L. Mcconnell¹⁸, T. H. McGrath⁵⁶, N. T. McHugh⁵³, A. McNab⁵⁶, R. McNulty¹⁸, J. V. Mead⁵⁴, B. Meadows⁵⁹, G. Meier¹⁵, D. Melnychuk³⁶, S. Meloni^{26,e}, M. Merk^{32,74}, A. Merli^{25,q}, L. Meyer Garcia², D. Miao^{4,6}, M. Mikhasenko^{70,t}, D. A. Milanese⁶⁹, E. Millard⁵⁰, M. Milovanovic⁴², M.-N. Minard^{8,a}, A. Minotti^{26,e}, T. Miralles⁹, S. E. Mitchell⁵², B. Mitreska⁵⁶, D. S. Mitzel¹⁵, A. Mödden¹⁵, R. A. Mohammed⁵⁷, R. D. Moise¹⁴, S. Mokhnenko³⁸, T. Mombächer⁴⁰, M. Monk^{50,63}, I. A. Monroy⁶⁹, S. Monteil⁹, M. Morandin²⁸, G. Morello²³, M. J. Morello^{29,c}, J. Moron³⁴, A. B. Morris⁷⁰, A. G. Morris⁵⁰, R. Mountain⁶², H. Mu³, E. Muhammad⁵⁰, F. Muheim⁵², M. Mulder⁷³, K. Müller⁴⁴, C. H. Murphy⁵⁷, D. Murray⁵⁶, R. Murta⁵⁵, P. Muzzetto^{27,j}, P. Naik⁴⁸, T. Nakada⁴³, R. Nandakumar⁵¹, T. Nanut⁴², I. Nasteva², M. Needham⁵², N. Neri^{25,q}, S. Neubert⁷⁰, N. Neufeld⁴², P. Neustroev³⁸, R. Newcombe⁵⁵, J. Nicolini^{15,11}, E. M. Niel⁴³, S. Nieswand¹⁴, N. Nikitin³⁸, N. S. Nolte⁵⁸, C. Normand^{8,27,j}, J. Novoa Fernandez⁴⁰, C. Nunez⁷⁸, A. Oblakowska-Mucha³⁴, V. Obraztsov³⁸, T. Oeser¹⁴, D. P. O'Hanlon⁴⁸, S. Okamura^{21,d}, R. Oldeman^{27,j}

F. Oliva⁵², C. J. G. Onderwater⁷³, R. H. O'Neil⁵², J. M. Otalora Goicochea², T. Ovsianikova³⁸, P. Owen⁴⁴,
A. Oyanguren⁴¹, O. Ozcelik⁵², K. O. Padeken⁷⁰, B. Pagare⁵⁰, P. R. Pais⁴², T. Pajero⁵⁷, A. Palano¹⁹,
M. Palutan²³, Y. Pan⁵⁶, G. Panshin³⁸, L. Paolucci⁵⁰, A. Papanestis⁵¹, M. Pappagallo^{19,i}, L. L. Pappalardo^{21,d},
C. Pappenheimer⁵⁹, W. Parker⁶⁰, C. Parkes⁵⁶, B. Passalacqua^{21,d}, G. Passaleva²², A. Pastore¹⁹, M. Patel⁵⁵,
C. Patrignani^{20,f}, C. J. Pawley⁷⁴, A. Pearce⁴², A. Pellegrino³², M. Pepe Altarelli⁴², S. Perazzini²⁰, D. Pereima³⁸,
A. Pereiro Castro⁴⁰, P. Perret⁹, M. Petric⁵³, K. Petridis⁴⁸, A. Petrolini^{24,g}, A. Petrov³⁸, S. Petrucci⁵², M. Petruzzo²⁵,
H. Pham⁶², A. Philippov³⁸, R. Piandani⁶, L. Pica^{29,c}, M. Piccini⁷², B. Pietrzyk⁸, G. Pietrzyk¹¹, M. Pili⁵⁷,
D. Pinci³⁰, F. Pisani⁴², M. Pizzichemi^{26,42,e}, V. Placinta³⁷, J. Plews⁴⁷, M. Plo Casasus⁴⁰, F. Polci^{13,42},
M. Poli Lener²³, M. Poliakov⁶², A. Poluektov¹⁰, N. Polukhina^{38,38}, I. Polyakov⁴², E. Polycarpo², S. Ponce⁴²,
D. Popov^{6,42}, S. Popov³⁸, S. Poslavskii³⁸, K. Prasanth³⁵, L. Promberger⁴², C. Prouve⁴⁰, V. Pugatch⁴⁶,
V. Puill¹¹, G. Punzi^{29,u}, H. R. Qi³, W. Qian⁶, N. Qin³, S. Qu³, R. Quagliani⁴³, N. V. Raab¹⁸,
R. I. Rabadan Trejo⁶, B. Rachwal³⁴, J. H. Rademacker⁴⁸, R. Rajagopalan⁶², M. Rama²⁹, M. Ramos Pernas⁵⁰,
M. S. Rangel², F. Ratnikov^{38,38}, G. Raven^{33,42}, M. Rebollo De Miguel⁴¹, F. Redi⁴², J. Reich⁴⁸, F. Reiss⁵⁶,
C. Remon Alepuz⁴¹, Z. Ren³, P. K. Resmi¹⁰, R. Ribatti^{29,c}, A. M. Ricci²⁷, S. Ricciardi⁵¹, K. Richardson⁵⁸,
M. Richardson-Slipper⁵², K. Rinnert⁵⁴, P. Robbe¹¹, G. Robertson⁵², A. B. Rodrigues⁴³, E. Rodrigues⁵⁴,
E. Rodriguez Fernandez⁴⁰, J. A. Rodriguez Lopez⁶⁹, E. Rodriguez Rodriguez⁴⁰, D. L. Rolf⁴², A. Rollings⁵⁷,
P. Roloff⁴², V. Romanovskiy³⁸, M. Romero Lamas⁴⁰, A. Romero Vidal⁴⁰, J. D. Roth^{78,a}, M. Rotondo²³,
M. S. Rudolph⁶², T. Ruf⁴², R. A. Ruiz Fernandez⁴⁰, J. Ruiz Vidal⁴¹, A. Ryzhikov³⁸, J. Ryzka³⁴,
J. J. Saborido Silva⁴⁰, N. Sagidova³⁸, N. Sahoo⁴⁷, B. Saitta^{27,j}, M. Salomoni⁴², C. Sanchez Gras³²,
I. Sanderswood⁴¹, R. Santacesaria³⁰, C. Santamarina Rios⁴⁰, M. Santimaria²³, E. Santovetti^{31,l}, D. Saranin³⁸,
G. Sarpis¹⁴, M. Sarpis⁷⁰, A. Sarti³⁰, C. Satriano^{30,v}, A. Satta³¹, M. Saur¹⁵, D. Savrina^{38,38}, H. Sazak⁹,
L. G. Scantlebury Smead⁵⁷, A. Scarabotto¹³, S. Schael¹⁴, S. Scherl⁵⁴, M. Schiller⁵³, H. Schindler⁴²,
M. Schmelling¹⁶, B. Schmidt⁴², S. Schmitt¹⁴, O. Schneider⁴³, A. Schopper⁴², M. Schubiger³², S. Schulte⁴³,
M. H. Schune¹¹, R. Schwemmer⁴², B. Sciascia^{23,42}, A. Sciucchi⁴², S. Sellam⁴⁰, A. Semennikov³⁸,
M. Senghi Soares³³, A. Sergi^{24,g}, N. Serra⁴⁴, L. Sestini²⁸, A. Seuthe¹⁵, Y. Shang⁵, D. M. Shangase⁷⁸,
M. Shapkin³⁸, I. Shchemerov³⁸, L. Shchutska⁴³, T. Shears⁵⁴, L. Shekhtman^{38,38}, Z. Shen⁵, S. Sheng^{4,6},
V. Shevchenko³⁸, B. Shi⁶, E. B. Shields^{26,e}, Y. Shimizu¹¹, E. Shmanin³⁸, R. Shorkin³⁸, J. D. Shupperd⁶²,
B. G. Siddi^{21,d}, R. Silva Coutinho⁶², G. Simi²⁸, S. Simone^{19,i}, M. Singla⁶³, N. Skidmore⁵⁶, R. Skuza¹⁷,
T. Skwarnicki⁶², M. W. Slater⁴⁷, J. C. Smallwood⁵⁷, J. G. Smeaton⁴⁹, E. Smith⁴⁴, K. Smith⁶¹, M. Smith⁵⁵,
A. Snoch³², L. Soares Lavra⁹, M. D. Sokoloff⁵⁹, F. J. P. Soler⁵³, A. Solomin^{38,48}, A. Solovev³⁸, I. Solovyev³⁸,
R. Song⁶³, F. L. Souza De Almeida², B. Souza De Paula², B. Spaan^{15,a}, E. Spadaro Norella^{25,q}, E. Spedicato²⁰,
E. Spiridenkov³⁸, P. Spradlin⁵³, V. Sriskaran⁴², F. Stagni⁴², M. Stahl⁴², S. Stahl⁴², S. Stanislaus⁵⁷, E. N. Stein⁴²,
O. Steinkamp⁴⁴, O. Stenyakin³⁸, H. Stevens¹⁵, S. Stone^{62,a}, D. Strelakina³⁸, F. Suljik⁵⁷, J. Sun²⁷, L. Sun⁶⁸,
Y. Sun⁶⁰, P. Svihra⁵⁶, P. N. Swallow⁴⁷, K. Swientek³⁴, A. Szabelski³⁶, T. Szumlak³⁴, M. Szymanski⁴², Y. Tan³,
S. Taneja⁵⁶, A. R. Tanner⁴⁸, M. D. Tat⁵⁷, A. Terentev³⁸, F. Teubert⁴², E. Thomas⁴², D. J. D. Thompson⁴⁷,
K. A. Thomson⁵⁴, H. Tilquin⁵⁵, V. Tisserand⁹, S. T'Jampens⁸, M. Tobin⁴, L. Tomassetti^{21,d}, G. Tonani^{25,q},
X. Tong⁵, D. Torres Machado¹, D. Y. Tou³, E. Trifonova³⁸, S. M. Trilov⁴⁸, C. Trippel⁴³, G. Tuci⁶, A. Tully⁴³,
N. Tuning³², A. Ukleja³⁶, D. J. Unverzagt¹⁷, A. Usachov³², A. Ustyuzhanin^{38,38}, U. Uwer¹⁷, A. Vagner³⁸,
V. Vagnoni²⁰, A. Valassi⁴², G. Valenti²⁰, N. Valls Canudas⁷⁶, M. van Beuzekom³², M. Van Dijk⁴³,
H. Van Hecke⁶¹, E. van Herwijnen³⁸, C. B. Van Hulse^{40,w}, M. van Veghel⁷³, R. Vazquez Gomez³⁹,
P. Vazquez Regueiro⁴⁰, C. Vázquez Sierra⁴², S. Vecchi²¹, J. J. Velthuis⁴⁸, M. Veltri^{22,x}, A. Venkateswaran⁴³,
M. Veronesi³², M. Vesterinen⁵⁰, D. Vieira⁵⁹, M. Vieites Diaz⁴³, X. Vilasis-Cardona⁷⁶, E. Vilella Figueras⁵⁴,
A. Villa²⁰, P. Vincent¹³, F. C. Volle¹¹, D. vom Bruch¹⁰, A. Vorobyev³⁸, V. Vorobyev³⁸, N. Voropaev³⁸, K. Vos⁷⁴,
C. Vrahas⁵², R. Waldi¹⁷, J. Walsh²⁹, G. Wan⁵, C. Wang¹⁷, J. Wang⁵, J. Wang⁴, J. Wang³, J. Wang⁶⁸,
M. Wang⁵, R. Wang⁴⁸, X. Wang⁶⁶, Y. Wang⁷, Z. Wang⁴⁴, Z. Wang³, Z. Wang⁶, J. A. Ward^{50,63},
N. K. Watson⁴⁷, D. Websdale⁵⁵, Y. Wei⁵, C. Weisser⁵⁸, B. D. C. Westhenry⁴⁸, D. J. White⁵⁶, M. Whitehead⁵³,
A. R. Wiederhold⁵⁰, D. Wiedner¹⁵, G. Wilkinson⁵⁷, M. K. Wilkinson⁵⁹, I. Williams⁴⁹, M. Williams⁵⁸,
M. R. J. Williams⁵², R. Williams⁴⁹, F. F. Wilson⁵¹, W. Wislicki³⁶, M. Witek³⁵, L. Witola¹⁷, C. P. Wong⁶¹,
G. Wormser¹¹, S. A. Wotton⁴⁹, H. Wu⁶², K. Wyllie⁴², Z. Xiang⁶, D. Xiao⁷, Y. Xie⁷, A. Xu⁵, J. Xu⁶, L. Xu³

L. Xu³, M. Xu⁵⁰, Q. Xu⁶, Z. Xu⁹, Z. Xu⁶, D. Yang³, S. Yang⁶, X. Yang⁵, Y. Yang⁶, Z. Yang⁵, Z. Yang⁶⁰,
 L. E. Yeomans⁵⁴, V. Yeroshenko¹¹, H. Yeung⁵⁶, H. Yin⁷, J. Yu⁶⁵, X. Yuan⁶², E. Zaffaroni⁴³, M. Zavertyaev¹⁶,
 M. Zdybal³⁵, O. Zenaiev⁴², M. Zeng³, C. Zhang⁵, D. Zhang⁷, L. Zhang³, S. Zhang⁶⁵, S. Zhang⁵, Y. Zhang⁵,
 Y. Zhang⁵⁷, A. Zharkova³⁸, A. Zhelezov¹⁷, Y. Zheng⁶, T. Zhou⁵, X. Zhou⁶, Y. Zhou⁶, V. Zhovkovska¹¹,
 X. Zhu³, X. Zhu⁷, Z. Zhu⁶, V. Zhukov^{14,38}, Q. Zou^{4,6}, S. Zucchelli^{20,f}, D. Zuliani²⁸ and G. Zunica⁵⁶

(LHCb Collaboration)

¹Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Físicas (CBPF), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

²Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

³Center for High Energy Physics, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China

⁴Institute Of High Energy Physics (IHEP), Beijing, China

⁵School of Physics State Key Laboratory of Nuclear Physics and Technology, Peking University, Beijing, China

⁶University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China

⁷Institute of Particle Physics, Central China Normal University, Wuhan, Hubei, China

⁸Université Savoie Mont Blanc, CNRS, IN2P3-LAPP, Annecy, France

⁹Université Clermont Auvergne, CNRS/IN2P3, LPC, Clermont-Ferrand, France

¹⁰Aix Marseille Univ, CNRS/IN2P3, CPPM, Marseille, France

¹¹Université Paris-Saclay, CNRS/IN2P3, IJCLab, Orsay, France

¹²Laboratoire Leprince-Ringuet, CNRS/IN2P3, Ecole Polytechnique, Institut Polytechnique de Paris, Palaiseau, France

¹³LPNHE, Sorbonne Université, Paris Diderot Sorbonne Paris Cité, CNRS/IN2P3, Paris, France

¹⁴I. Physikalisches Institut, RWTH Aachen University, Aachen, Germany

¹⁵Fakultät Physik, Technische Universität Dortmund, Dortmund, Germany

¹⁶Max-Planck-Institut für Kernphysik (MPIK), Heidelberg, Germany

¹⁷Physikalisches Institut, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany

¹⁸School of Physics, University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

¹⁹INFN Sezione di Bari, Bari, Italy

²⁰INFN Sezione di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

²¹INFN Sezione di Ferrara, Ferrara, Italy

²²INFN Sezione di Firenze, Firenze, Italy

²³INFN Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, Frascati, Italy

²⁴INFN Sezione di Genova, Genova, Italy

²⁵INFN Sezione di Milano, Milano, Italy

²⁶INFN Sezione di Milano-Bicocca, Milano, Italy

²⁷INFN Sezione di Cagliari, Monserrato, Italy

²⁸Università degli Studi di Padova, Università e INFN, Padova, Padova, Italy

²⁹INFN Sezione di Pisa, Pisa, Italy

³⁰INFN Sezione di Roma La Sapienza, Roma, Italy

³¹INFN Sezione di Roma Tor Vergata, Roma, Italy

³²Nikhef National Institute for Subatomic Physics, Amsterdam, Netherlands

³³Nikhef National Institute for Subatomic Physics and VU University Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

³⁴AGH - University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Physics and Applied Computer Science, Kraków, Poland

³⁵Henryk Niewodniczanski Institute of Nuclear Physics Polish Academy of Sciences, Kraków, Poland

³⁶National Center for Nuclear Research (NCBJ), Warsaw, Poland

³⁷Horia Hulubei National Institute of Physics and Nuclear Engineering, Bucharest-Magurele, Romania

³⁸Affiliated with an institute covered by a cooperation agreement with CERN

³⁹ICCUB, Universitat de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

⁴⁰Instituto Galego de Física de Altas Enerxías (IGFAE), Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

⁴¹Instituto de Física Corpuscular, Centro Mixto Universidad de Valencia - CSIC, Valencia, Spain

⁴²European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), Geneva, Switzerland

⁴³Institute of Physics, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Lausanne, Switzerland

⁴⁴Physik-Institut, Universität Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland

⁴⁵NSC Kharkiv Institute of Physics and Technology (NSC KIPT), Kharkiv, Ukraine

⁴⁶Institute for Nuclear Research of the National Academy of Sciences (KINR), Kyiv, Ukraine

⁴⁷University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom

⁴⁸H.H. Wills Physics Laboratory, University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom

⁴⁹Cavendish Laboratory, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom

- ⁵⁰*Department of Physics, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom*
⁵¹*STFC Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Didcot, United Kingdom*
⁵²*School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, United Kingdom*
⁵³*School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, United Kingdom*
⁵⁴*Oliver Lodge Laboratory, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom*
⁵⁵*Imperial College London, London, United Kingdom*
⁵⁶*Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom*
⁵⁷*Department of Physics, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom*
⁵⁸*Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, United States*
⁵⁹*University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH, United States*
⁶⁰*University of Maryland, College Park, MD, United States*
⁶¹*Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), Los Alamos, NM, United States*
⁶²*Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, United States*
⁶³*School of Physics and Astronomy, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia*
(associated with Department of Physics, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom)
⁶⁴*Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*
(associated with Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
⁶⁵*Physics and Micro Electronic College, Hunan University, Changsha City, China*
(associated with Institute of Particle Physics, Central China Normal University, Wuhan, Hubei, China)
⁶⁶*Guangdong Provincial Key Laboratory of Nuclear Science, Guangdong-Hong Kong Joint Laboratory of Quantum Matter, Institute of Quantum Matter, South China Normal University, Guangzhou, China*
(associated with Center for High Energy Physics, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China)
⁶⁷*Lanzhou University, Lanzhou, China*
(associated with Institute Of High Energy Physics (IHEP), Beijing, China)
⁶⁸*School of Physics and Technology, Wuhan University, Wuhan, China*
(associated with Center for High Energy Physics, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China)
⁶⁹*Departamento de Física, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogota, Colombia*
(associated with LPNHE, Sorbonne Université, Paris Diderot Sorbonne Paris Cité, CNRS/IN2P3, Paris, France)
⁷⁰*Universität Bonn - Helmholtz-Institut für Strahlen und Kernphysik, Bonn, Germany*
(associated with Physikalisches Institut, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany)
⁷¹*Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest, Hungary*
(associated with European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), Geneva, Switzerland)
⁷²*INFN Sezione di Perugia, Perugia, Italy*
(associated with INFN Sezione di Ferrara, Ferrara, Italy)
⁷³*Van Swinderen Institute, University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands*
(associated with Nikhef National Institute for Subatomic Physics, Amsterdam, Netherlands)
⁷⁴*Universiteit Maastricht, Maastricht, Netherlands*
(associated with Nikhef National Institute for Subatomic Physics, Amsterdam, Netherlands)
⁷⁵*Tadeusz Kosciuszko Cracow University of Technology, Cracow, Poland*
(associated with Henryk Niewodniczanski Institute of Nuclear Physics Polish Academy of Sciences, Kraków, Poland)
⁷⁶*DS4DS, La Salle, Universitat Ramon Llull, Barcelona, Spain*
(associated with ICCUB, Universitat de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain)
⁷⁷*Department of Physics and Astronomy, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden*
(associated with School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, United Kingdom)
⁷⁸*University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, United States*
(associated with Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, United States)

^aDeceased.

^bAlso at Università di Firenze, Firenze, Italy.

^cAlso at Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa, Italy.

^dAlso at Università di Ferrara, Ferrara, Italy.

^eAlso at Università di Milano Bicocca, Milano, Italy.

^fAlso at Università di Bologna, Bologna, Italy.

^gAlso at Università di Genova, Genova, Italy.

^hAlso at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

ⁱAlso at Università di Bari, Bari, Italy.

^jAlso at Università di Cagliari, Cagliari, Italy.

^kAlso at Università di Perugia, Perugia, Italy.

^lAlso at Università di Roma Tor Vergata, Roma, Italy.

^mAlso at Universidade Federal do Triângulo Mineiro (UFTM), Uberaba-MG, Brazil.

ⁿAlso at Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil.

^oAlso at Hangzhou Institute for Advanced Study, UCAS, Hangzhou, China.

^pAlso at Università di Siena, Siena, Italy.

^qAlso at Università degli Studi di Milano, Milano, Italy.

^rAlso at Central South U., Changsha, China.

^sAlso at Università di Padova, Padova, Italy.

^tAlso at Excellence Cluster ORIGINS, Munich, Germany.

^uAlso at Università di Pisa, Pisa, Italy.

^vAlso at Università della Basilicata, Potenza, Italy.

^wAlso at Universidad de Alcalá, Alcalá de Henares, Spain.

^xAlso at Università di Urbino, Urbino, Italy.