EUROPEAN ORGANISATION FOR NUCLEAR RESEARCH (CERN)

Submitted to: PRL

CERN-EP-2024-042
February 23, 2024

Search for a new Z' gauge boson via the $pp \to W^{\pm(*)} \to Z'\mu^{\pm}\nu \to \mu^{\pm}\mu^{\mp}\mu^{\pm}\nu$ process in pp collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV with the ATLAS detector

The ATLAS Collaboration

A search for a new Z' gauge boson predicted by $L_{\mu} - L_{\tau}$ models, based on charged-current Drell–Yan production, $pp \to W^{\pm(*)} \to Z'\mu^{\pm}\nu \to \mu^{\pm}\mu^{\mp}\mu^{\pm}\nu$, is presented. The data sample used corresponds to an integrated luminosity of 140 fb^{-1} of proton–proton collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV recorded by the ATLAS detector at the Large Hadron Collider. The search examines a final state of 3μ plus large missing transverse momentum. Upper limits are set on the Z' production cross-section times branching ratio in the mass range of 5–81 GeV. After combining with the previous Z' search using the neutral-current Drell–Yan production with a 4μ final state, the most stringent exclusion limits to date are achieved in the parameter space of the Z' coupling strength and mass.

Various extensions of the Standard Model (SM) feature an extra $U(1)$ gauge symmetry and predict a new massive gauge boson, generally referred to as Z' [1, 2]. Typical benchmark models include the Sequential Standard Model [3], Grand Unified Theories based on the E_6 gauge group [4], and left (L)-right (R) symmetric extensions of the SM based on the $SU(2)_L \otimes SU(2)_R \otimes U(1)_{B-L}$ gauge group [5–7], where $B - L$ denotes the difference between baryon and lepton numbers. Any Z' boson that couples significantly to light quarks is already severely constrained by experiment. Alternatively, $U(1)$ gauge symmetries based on the difference between lepton family numbers are less constrained and are anomaly free [8]. The model based on gauging the difference between μ-lepton number and τ-lepton number, $L_\mu - L_\tau$, is particularly interesting since it is the least constrained experimentally, because the $L_\mu - L_\tau$ Z' boson only couples to the second and third generations of leptons. In recent years, this model has attracted interest in both theoretical and experimental communities [9–11] because it could address some of the reported anomalies, such as the measured muon anomalous magnetic moment [12, 13] and lepton flavor anomalies [14–18]. In addition, these models also provide a viable solution to dark matter and neutrino mass [2, 19, 20].

The interaction between the Z' boson and the second- and third-generation leptons can be described with the following Lagrangian

$$L_{Z'} = -\frac{1}{4}F_{\alpha\beta}F^{\alpha\beta} + \frac{1}{2}m_{Z'}^2 Z'^{\alpha}Z'_{\alpha} - g_{Z'}Z'_{\alpha}(\bar{\ell}_2\gamma^{\alpha}\ell_2 + \mu_L\gamma^{\alpha}\mu_R - \bar{\ell}_3\gamma^{\alpha}\ell_3 - \tau_L\gamma^{\alpha}\tau_R),$$

where $F_{\alpha\beta} = \partial_\alpha Z'_\beta - \partial_\beta Z'_\alpha$ is the Z' field strength tensor; $\ell_i = (\nu_i, e_i)^T$ ($i = 2, 3$, denoting the second and the third generation left-handed lepton doublets); and $g_{Z'}$ (from hereon referred to as g) is the coupling constant of the interaction between the Z' boson and the SM leptons. The Z'-boson mass, $m_{Z'}$, and g are the free parameters of the model. In proton–proton (pp) collisions at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), the Z' boson could be produced by final state radiation from μ, ν_μ, τ and ν_τ leptons originating from other physics processes.

This letter presents the first search for a $L_\mu - L_\tau$ Z' boson produced from leptons arising from charged-current Drell–Yan (DY) process, $pp \to W^{\pm(*)} \to Z'\mu^\pm\nu \to \mu^\pm\mu^\mp\mu^\pm\nu$ (see Figure 1), giving a final state of 3μ plus large missing transverse momentum. This novel search complements previous analyses by the ATLAS and CMS Collaborations using neutral-current DY process with a 4μ final state, $pp \to Z^{(*)} \to Z'\mu^+\mu^- \to \mu^+\mu^-\mu^+\mu^-$, and has a much higher cross-section by a factor of 3–6. The CMS Collaboration searched for the Z' boson in the mass range of 5–70 GeV using 77.3 fb^{-1} of pp collision data at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV [21]. The ATLAS Collaboration searched for the Z' boson with a mass up to 81 GeV using 139 fb^{-1} of data at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV [22].

The ATLAS experiment at the LHC is a multipurpose particle detector with a forward–backward symmetric cylindrical geometry and a near 4π coverage in solid angle [23–25].[1] The pp collision data at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV recorded by the ATLAS experiment during 2015–2018 are used. The

[1] ATLAS uses a right-handed coordinate system with its origin at the nominal interaction point (IP) in the center of the detector and the z-axis along the beam pipe.The x-axis points from the IP to the center of the LHC ring, and the y-axis points upward. Cylindrical coordinates (r, ϕ) are used in the transverse plane, ϕ being the azimuthal angle around the z-axis. The pseudorapidity is defined in terms of the polar angle θ as $\eta = -\ln\tan\theta/2$. Angular distance is measured in units of $\Delta R \equiv \sqrt{(\Delta\eta)^2 + (\Delta\phi)^2}$.

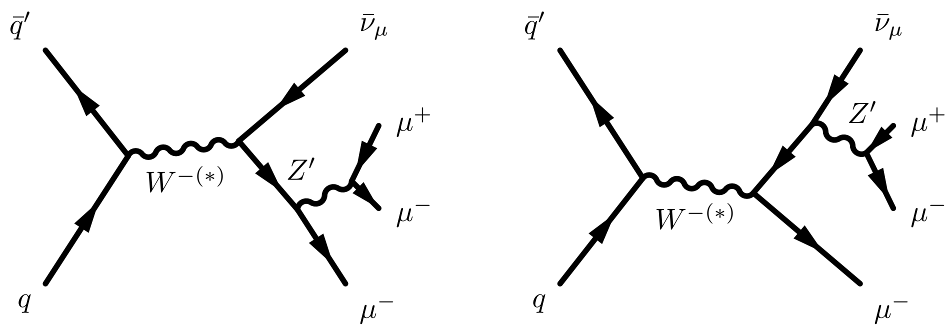


Figure 1: Representative Feynman diagrams of a Z' boson via radiation off a lepton in charged-current Drell–Yan production giving a $\mu^-\mu^+\mu^-\bar{\nu}_\mu$ final state.

corresponding integrated luminosity is 140 fb^{-1} after applying data quality requirements [26]. A combination of single-lepton and multi-lepton triggers [27, 28] is used, with transverse momentum (p_{T}) thresholds varying from 20 to 26 GeV for single-muon triggers, 10 to 14 GeV for di-muon triggers, and 6 GeV for tri-muon triggers. The overall trigger efficiency is greater than 96% for events passing the offline event selection. An extensive software suite [29] is used in data simulation, in the reconstruction and analysis of real and simulated data, in detector operations, and in the trigger and data acquisition systems of the experiment.

Monte Carlo (MC) signal samples are simulated using MadGraph5_aMC@NLO 2.9.5 [30], with matrix elements (ME) calculated at leading-order (LO) in perturbative quantum chromodynamics (QCD) and with the NNPDF3.0nlo [31] parton distribution function (PDF) set. The events were interfaced to Pythia 8.245 [32] to model the parton shower, hadronization, and underlying event, with parameter values set according to the A14 parton-shower tune [33] and using the NNPDF2.3lo [34] set of PDFs. The appropriate next-to-next-to-leading-order (NNLO) to LO K-factor of 1.3 is used to correct the MC LO signal cross-sections [35, 36]. Benchmark signal samples are generated in the mass range of 5–81 GeV following the previous 4μ search [22] and to ensure a negligible Z' width compared with the detector resolution. The contribution from $pp \to Z'\tau\bar{\nu}_\tau$ to this search is found to be negligible and thus is not included in the MC signal samples.

The dominant SM background processes, $q\bar{q}' \to W(Z/\gamma^*) \to \ell^\pm\nu\ell^\pm\ell^\mp$ ($l = e, \mu, \tau$; $\nu = \nu_e, \nu_\mu, \nu_\tau$; referred to as $q\bar{q}' \to \ell^\pm\nu\ell^\pm\ell^\mp$) and $q\bar{q} \to (Z/\gamma^*)(Z/\gamma^*) \to \ell^+\ell^-\ell^+\ell^-$(referred to as $q\bar{q} \to \ell^+\ell^-\ell^+\ell^-$), are simulated with the Sherpa 2.2.2 event generator [37]. Matrix elements are calculated at next-to-leading-order (NLO) accuracy in QCD for up to one additional parton and at LO accuracy for two and three additional parton emissions. The ME calculations are matched and merged with the Sherpa parton shower based on Catani–Seymour dipole factorization [38, 39], using the MEPS@NLO prescription [40–43]. Sherpa 2.2.2 is also used for the $gg \to \ell^+\ell^-\ell^+\ell^-$ process, with LO precision for zero- and one-jet final states, where a constant K-factor of 1.7 [44] is applied to account for NLO effects on the cross-section. The events with non-prompt leptons arising from Z + jets and $t\bar{t}$ processes are modeled using Sherpa 2.2.1 and Powheg Box v2 generators [45–48], respectively. Samples for other subdominant processes, such as the resonant $H \to ZZ^* \to 4\ell$ process, triboson processes ($VVV, V = W, Z$) and W/Z bosons produced along with a $t\bar{t}$ pair ($t\bar{t}V$), are also simulated as described in Ref. [22] and their contribution is found to be negligible and thus ignored.

Except for the signal, all samples are produced with a detailed simulation of the ATLAS detector [49] based on Geant4 [50] to produce predictions that can be compared with the data. The signal samples are processed through a faster simulation where the full Geant4 simulation of the calorimeter response is replaced by a parameterization of the shower shapes [49]. Furthermore, simulated inelastic minimum-bias events are overlaid to model additional pp collisions in the same and neighboring bunch crossings (pileup) [51]. Simulated events are reweighted to match the pileup conditions in the data. All simulated events were processed using the same reconstruction algorithms as used for data.

Interaction vertices from the pp collisions are reconstructed from at least two tracks with $p_{\mathrm{T}} > 500$ MeV that are consistent with originating from the beam collision region in the x-y plane. If more than one primary vertex candidate is found in the event, the candidate for which the associated tracks form the largest sum of squared p_{T} is selected as the hard-scatter primary vertex.

Muon candidates are reconstructed by combining the information from both the muon spectrometer (MS) and the inner detector (ID). Muons are required to satisfy the 'Medium' identification criterion [52] and have $p_{\mathrm{T}} > 3$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$. Electrons and jets are used to select control samples for the background estimate. Electrons are reconstructed from energy clusters in the electromagnetic calorimeter matched to ID tracks. Candidate electrons must satisfy the 'Tight' likelihood identification criterion [53] and have $p_{\mathrm{T}} > 4.5$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.47$, excluding the transition region between the barrel and endcaps in the calorimeter ($1.37 < |\eta| < 1.52$). All muons and electrons must be isolated from other particles based on a particle-flow algorithm and satisfy the 'PflowLoose' and 'PflowTight' isolation criteria [52, 53], respectively. Furthermore, muons (electrons) are required to have matched tracks satisfying $|d_0|/\sigma_{d_0} < 3$ (5) and $|z_0 \sin(\theta)| < 0.5$ mm, where d_0 is the transverse impact parameter relative to the beam line, σ_{d_0} is its uncertainty, and z_0 is the longitudinal impact parameter relative to the primary vertex.

Jet candidates are reconstructed from particle flow objects [54] using the anti-k_t algorithm with a radius parameter of $R = 0.4$ [55, 56]. They are calibrated using simulation with corrections obtained from in situ techniques in data [57]. A jet vertex tagger algorithm [58] is applied to suppress pileup jets. All jets must have $p_{\mathrm{T}} > 30$ GeV and $|\eta| < 4.5$. Jets containing b-hadrons, referred to as b-jets, are identified using a deep-learning neural network, `DL1r` [59]. The chosen working point has an efficiency of 85% for selecting b-jets with $p_{\mathrm{T}} > 20$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$ and a rejection factor of about 3 and 40 for charm-jets and light-flavor jets, respectively [59].

The missing transverse momentum, $\vec{p}_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$ (with magnitude $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$), is defined as the negative vector sum of the p_{T} of all selected and calibrated objects in the event, including a term to account for the momentum from soft particles in the event that are not associated with any of the selected objects [60].

Events are required to contain exactly three muon candidates satisfying the selection criteria previously described. Events with a fourth muon candidate satisfying a looser selection criterion as defined in the 4μ channel [22] are rejected to ensure the two search regions are disjoint. Candidate events are required to have a total charge from the muons equal to ±1. The three p_{T}-ordered muons are required to satisfy p_{T} thresholds of 20, 10, and 7 GeV, respectively. The muons firing triggers are also required to satisfy the corresponding trigger p_{T} thresholds. Events are required to have $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}} > 15$ GeV. To suppress the background contribution from top-quark production, events containing b-jets are rejected. Two opposite-sign muon pairs ($\mu^{+}\mu^{-}$) are selected from the three muons in each event. Both the $\mu^{+}\mu^{-}$ pair must have an invariant mass greater than 4 GeV to suppress the background contribution from low-mass resonances. The $\mu^{+}\mu^{-}$ pair with the largest mass is referred as the leading pair Z_1, and the other pair is referred to as the sub-leading pair Z_2. Events are required to satisfy $m_{Z_1} < 85$ GeV to suppress the background from Z-boson production. These selection requirements define the signal region (SR).

Background sources are classified into two categories: the irreducible background with events containing prompt muons, and the reducible background with events containing at least one non-prompt muon from hadron decays or misidentification of jets.

The irreducible background, which mainly originates from diboson production of $q\bar{q}' \to \ell^{\pm}\nu\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\mp}$ and $q\bar{q} \to \ell^{+}\ell^{-}\ell^{+}\ell^{-}$, is estimated by using simulation. The contribution from $t\bar{t}V$, VVV and Higgs boson production processes is found to be negligible. The background event yield of the dominant contribution from $q\bar{q}' \to \ell^{\pm}\nu\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\mp}$ production is normalized to data with the help of a control region (CR) enriched in $\ell^{\pm}\nu\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\mp}$ events, referred to as $\mathrm{CR}_{3\ell}$. The $\mathrm{CR}_{3\ell}$ sample is defined by selecting events with three leptons, where the lowest-p_{T} lepton must be a muon, satisfying the p_{T} requirements of 25, 20, and 20 GeV, respectively, and with $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}} > 25$ GeV. The same selection of lepton pairs used for the SR is implemented in the $\mathrm{CR}_{3\ell}$, and the leading lepton pair forming the Z-boson candidate must have an invariant mass in the range of 85–100 GeV.

The reducible background, with contributions from $Z+$jets, $Z+\gamma$, and $t\bar{t}$ production processes, is estimated by using a fake-factor method as described in Refs. [61, 62]. The fake factor is defined as the ratio of numbers of non-prompt muons $N_{\mathrm{fake}}^{\mathrm{tight}}/N_{\mathrm{fake}}^{\mathrm{loose}}$, where "tight" or "loose" indicate whether those muons satisfy the impact parameter and isolation requirements, or fail to meet at least one of the requirements. The fake factor is measured in Z + jets events, considering an additional muon candidate that does not originate from the Z-boson decay. The measurement is performed in bins of p_{T} of the additional muon and $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$. The non-prompt muon background is then estimated by applying the fake factor as a weight to events satisfying the same selection as the SR, but with at least one loose-not-tight muon required. The modeling of the estimated reducible background is studied in a validation region (VR), which is disjoint to both the SR and the $\mathrm{CR}_{3\ell}$. The VR is defined using the same selections used for the SR but with two opposite-sign electrons with $p_{\mathrm{T}} > 20$ GeV and a muon that satisfies the "tight" identification criteria. The non-prompt muon background in this VR is also estimated with the fake-factor method. The sum of the estimated non-prompt background yield and the MC prediction is consistent with data within the statistical uncertainties.

The signal and background have different distributions for the various kinematic variables. A *parameterized deep neural network* (pDNN) [63] is used to combine several discriminating variables into a single final discriminant. The pDNN architecture allows the training of a single classifier for multiple signal mass hypotheses in the search range by adding a mass parameter together with other inputs. The mass parameter is equal to the value of the nominal generated Z' mass for the signal component, while a random value is drawn from the same distribution for the background mass parameter. In the evaluation process, when applying the training results to real data, the mass parameter takes the value of the investigated signal mass. The algorithm was implemented in the PyTorch [64] framework. Two classifiers are trained for low (high) Z' mass searches using mass parameters less than (greater than or equal to) 40 GeV. A set of kinematic distributions was used for pDNN training input features: the p_{T} of each muon, the invariant mass of the Z_1, Z_2 and three-muon system, $\Delta\phi$ of each muon pair that forms the Z_1 and Z_2, $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$, H_{T}, which is the scalar sum of $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$ and the p_{T} of all muons, $V_{\mathrm{T}} = \sqrt{H_{\mathrm{T,x}}^2 + H_{\mathrm{T,y}}^2}$, and $M_{\mathrm{T}} = \sqrt{H_{\mathrm{T}}^2 - V_{\mathrm{T}}^2}$, where $H_{\mathrm{T,x}}(H_{\mathrm{T,y}})$ is the scalar sum of $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$ and the p_{T} of all muons along the direction of the $x(y)$-axis.

Systematic uncertainties due to imperfect modeling of the detector in the simulation or the underlying physics of each process are also considered for the prediction of signal and background processes.

Experimental uncertainties originate mainly from $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$ resolution and scale, measurements of muon momentum resolutions and scales, muon reconstruction and identification efficiencies, jet energy scale and resolution, and b-tagging efficiency. Uncertainties due to the trigger selection efficiency and pileup correction are also considered. In addition, the uncertainty in the combined 2015–2018 integrated luminosity is 0.83% [26], obtained using the LUCID-2 detector [65] for the primary luminosity measurements. Overall, the total experimental uncertainty in the predicted yields is 5% (7%) for the signal (background with prompt muons).

The theoretical uncertainties in the signal, and the major prompt background due to the diboson processes, include the uncertainties in PDFs, QCD scales, and α_{s}. The PDF uncertainty is estimated following the PDF4LHC [66] procedure. The α_{s} uncertainty is estimated by varying the nominal $\alpha_{\mathrm{s}} = 0.118$ by its uncertainty of ± 0.001. The QCD scale uncertainty is estimated by varying the renormalization and factorization scales, following the procedure described in Ref. [67]. The parton showering uncertainty is estimated by comparing events with different parton shower parameters in the Sherpa MC samples. The total theoretical uncertainties in the reconstructed event yields for the signal and the $q\bar{q}' \rightarrow \ell^{\pm}\nu\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\mp}$ background processes are estimated to be 15% and 13%, respectively, dominated by the QCD scale uncertainty. The interference effect between the signal and SM DY background is about 2%, and this effect is accounted as an uncertainty affecting the signal.

Systematic uncertainties assigned to the reducible background, about 11% in total, mainly account for the measurement of the fake factors, the differences between the composition of the events with fake leptons between Z + jets events and the events in the SR, and data statistical uncertainties in the dedicated region where fake factors are applied. The overall impact of systematic uncertainties in the search sensitivity is a degradation on the expected cross-section limits up to 14% in the mass range considered.

A simultaneous profile binned maximum-likelihood fit [68–70] to the distribution of pDNN score in the SR and the event yield of the $CR_{3\ell}$ is performed to constrain uncertainties and obtain information about a possible signal. The normalizations of both the signal and the $q\bar{q}' \rightarrow \ell^{\pm}\nu\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\mp}$ background are allowed to vary freely in the fit. The systematic uncertainties are modeled as nuisance parameters subject to Gaussian constraints in the likelihood fit. The expected signal yields and pDNN scores are interpolated across the MC generated signal samples and are used in the fitting process. The fit is independently performed for each signal mass point since the pDNN score depends on the value of $m_{Z'}$ under test. The binning of the pDNN distribution varies with each signal mass point to limit the size of the MC statistical uncertainties to at most 20% per bin and also to maximize the expected signal sensitivity.

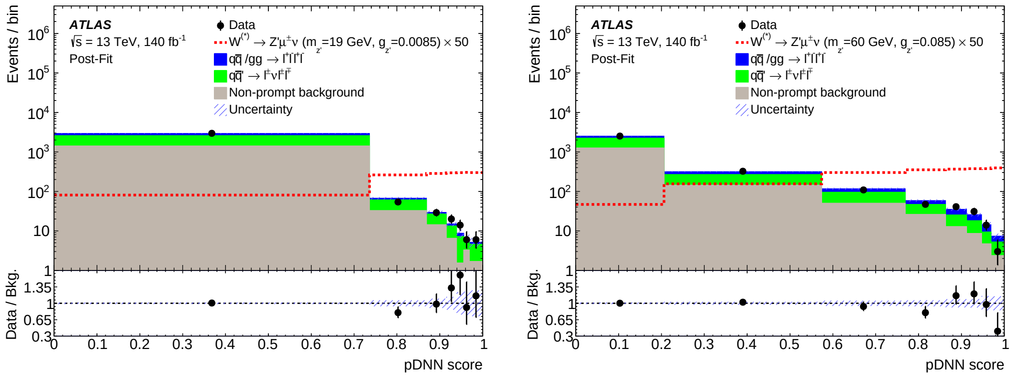
Table 1 shows the expected background and observed event yields in the SR after the background-only fit. The normalization factor of the $q\bar{q}' \rightarrow \ell^{\pm}\nu\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\mp}$ background is determined to be 0.92 ± 0.08 and 0.91 ± 0.09 when the pDNN score is obtained with $m_{Z'} = 19$ GeV and $m_{Z'} = 60$ GeV, respectively. The corresponding distributions of the pDNN score are presented in Figure 2.

Table 1: Summary of observed and expected background yields in the SR after the likelihood fit under the background-only hypothesis. The "Non-prompt" represents the contribution from non-prompt muons. The uncertainty in the total background yield can be smaller than the quadrature sum of the contributions because of correlations resulting from the fit. The expected signal yield obtained using the theoretical cross-section for a benchmark point ($m_{Z'} = 19$ GeV, $g_{Z'} = 0.0085$) is also shown with its pre-fit uncertainty.

Data	Total background	$q\bar{q}' \rightarrow \ell^{\pm}\nu\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\mp}$	$q\bar{q}/gg \rightarrow \ell^{+}\ell^{-}\ell^{+}\ell^{-}$	Non-prompt	Signal
3089	3080 ± 54	1125 ± 75	396 ± 51	1559 ± 86	36.5 ± 0.5

No significant deviation from the SM background hypothesis is observed and the largest excess of events is found for $m_{Z'}$ around 19 GeV, with a local significance of 2.4σ. Exclusion limits are set using the CL_s method [71]. Upper limits at 95% confidence level (CL) on the cross-section times branching fraction of the process $pp \rightarrow W^{\pm(*)} \rightarrow Z'\mu^{\pm}\nu \rightarrow \mu^{\pm}\mu^{\mp}\mu^{\pm}\nu$ are shown in Figure 3 as a function of $m_{Z'}$.

A statistical combination with the ATLAS search for Z' in the 4μ channel [22] is performed to improve the overall sensitivity. The coupling parameter g is used as a common parameter of interest for the 3μ and 4μ channels. The contribution of the signal process $pp \rightarrow Z^{(*)} \rightarrow Z'\mu^{+}\mu^{-} \rightarrow \mu^{+}\mu^{-}\mu^{+}\mu^{-}$ in the SR of the 3μ channel is also considered. Common experimental uncertainties and theoretical modeling uncertainties are fully correlated. The uncertainties relevant to backgrounds are uncorrelated due to a different background estimate in the 4μ channel. Upper limits at 95% CL on the coupling parameter g as a function of $m_{Z'}$ are shown in Figure 4(a). The combined exclusion limits are significantly improved relative to the 4μ channel. The improvement is up to 40% in the high-mass region, where the 3μ channel dominates the sensitivity. In Figure 4(b), the results are also compared with the exclusion regions inferred



(a) (b)

Figure 2: The distributions of the pDNN score corresponding to (a) $m_{Z'}$ = 19 GeV and (b) $m_{Z'}$ = 60 GeV in the SR for the data and post-fit background contributions. Signals are overlaid, with the predicted yield scaled up by a factor of 50. The error bands include experimental and theoretical systematic uncertainties. The ratio of the data to the background ("Bkg.") prediction is shown in the lower panel.

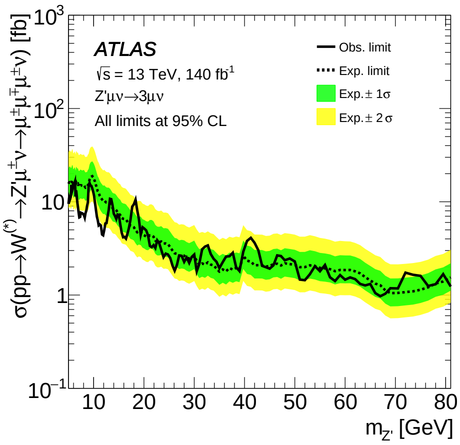
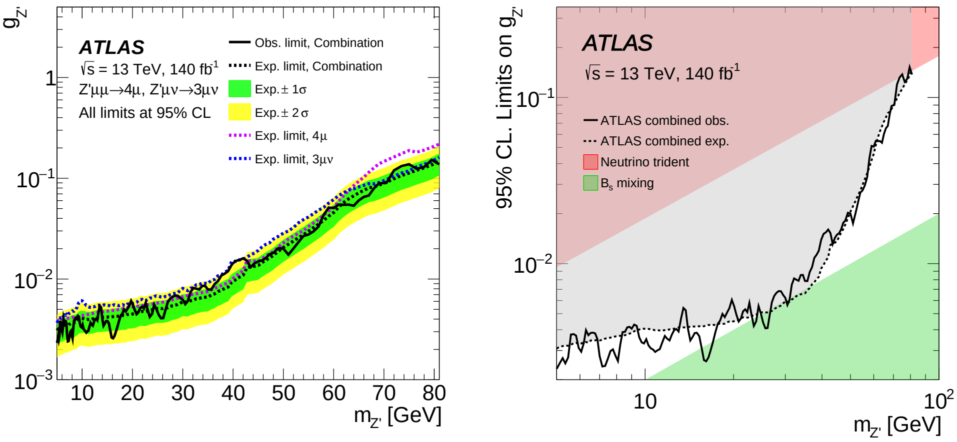


Figure 3: Observed (solid line) and expected (dashed line) upper limits at 95% CL on the production cross-section times branching fraction of the process $pp \to W^{\pm(*)} \to Z'\mu^{\pm}\nu \to \mu^{\pm}\mu^{\mp}\mu^{\pm}\nu$ as a function of $m_{Z'}$. The surrounding shaded bands correspond to ±1 and ±2 standard deviations around the expected limit.

from a measurement of neutrino tridents by the CCFR Collaboration [72] and the B_s mixing measurements by a global analysis performed in Ref. [19]. The large region in the parameter space up to 81 GeV allowed by the neutrino trident and B_s measurements is now largely excluded.



(a) (b)

Figure 4: Results from the statistical combination of the 3μ and 4μ channels: (a) observed and expected 95% CL upper limits on g as a function of $m_{Z'}$, (b) exclusion contour of g compared with the limits inferred from the neutrino-trident (red) and the B_s mixing (green) experimental results [19].

In conclusion, the search for a $L_\mu - L_\tau$ gauge boson Z' using charged-current Drell–Yan production is reported for the first time at the LHC, with a final state of 3μ plus large missing transverse momentum, using 140 fb^{-1} of $\sqrt{s}$ = 13 TeV proton–proton collision data collected with the ATLAS detector. This search benefits from the considerably higher Z' production cross-section compared with previous searches using the neutral-current Drell–Yan production, and has better sensitivity especially in the high $m_{Z'}$ region. No significant excess of events over the expected SM background is observed. Upper limits are set on the Z' production cross-section times the decay branching fraction of the $pp \to W^{\pm(*)} \to Z'\mu^\pm\nu \to \mu^\pm\mu^\mp\mu^\pm\nu$ process in a Z' mass range of 5–81 GeV. The search is further statistically combined with the Z' search using neutral-current Drell–Yan production with a 4μ final state [22]. The most stringent exclusion limits to date are set in the allowed parameter space of the Z' coupling strength and $m_{Z'}$.

Acknowledgments

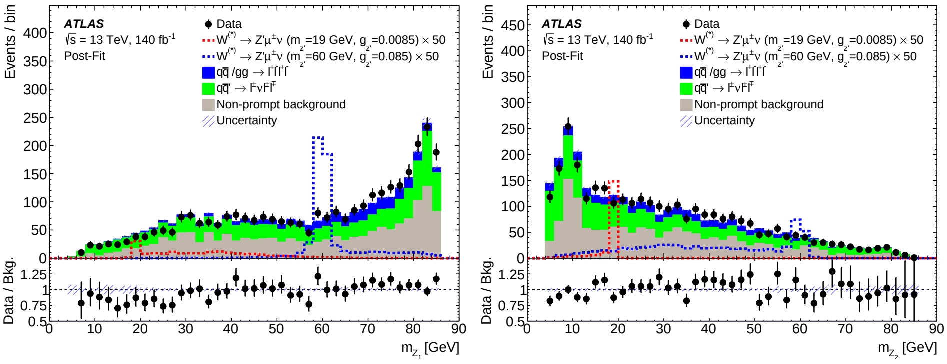
We thank CERN for the very successful operation of the LHC, as well as the support staff from our institutions without whom ATLAS could not be operated efficiently.

We acknowledge the support of ANPCyT, Argentina; YerPhI, Armenia; ARC, Australia; BMWFW and FWF, Austria; ANAS, Azerbaijan; CNPq and FAPESP, Brazil; NSERC, NRC and CFI, Canada; CERN; ANID, Chile; CAS, MOST and NSFC, China; Minciencias, Colombia; MEYS CR, Czech Republic; DNRF and DNSRC, Denmark; IN2P3-CNRS and CEA-DRF/IRFU, France; SRNSFG, Georgia; BMBF, HGF and MPG, Germany; GSRI, Greece; RGC and Hong Kong SAR, China; ISF and Benoziyo Center, Israel; INFN, Italy; MEXT and JSPS, Japan; CNRST, Morocco; NWO, Netherlands; RCN, Norway; MEiN, Poland; FCT, Portugal; MNE/IFA, Romania; MESTD, Serbia; MSSR, Slovakia; ARRS and MIZŠ, Slovenia; DSI/NRF, South Africa; MICINN, Spain; SRC and Wallenberg Foundation, Sweden; SERI, SNSF and Cantons of Bern and Geneva, Switzerland; MOST, Taipei; TENMAK, Türkiye; STFC, United Kingdom; DOE and NSF, United States of America. In addition, individual groups and members have received support from BCKDF, CANARIE, CRC and DRAC, Canada; PRIMUS 21/SCI/017 and UNCE SCI/013, Czech Republic; COST, ERC, ERDF, Horizon 2020, ICSC-NextGenerationEU and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, European Union; Investissements d'Avenir Labex, Investissements d'Avenir Idex and ANR, France; DFG and AvH Foundation, Germany; Herakleitos, Thales and Aristeia programmes co-financed by EU-ESF and the Greek NSRF, Greece; BSF-NSF and MINERVA, Israel; Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, Norway; NCN and NAWA, Poland; La Caixa Banking Foundation, CERCA Programme Generalitat de Catalunya and PROMETEO and GenT Programmes Generalitat Valenciana, Spain; Göran Gustafssons Stiftelse, Sweden; The Royal Society and Leverhulme Trust, United Kingdom.

The crucial computing support from all WLCG partners is acknowledged gratefully, in particular from CERN, the ATLAS Tier-1 facilities at TRIUMF/SFU (Canada), NDGF (Denmark, Norway, Sweden), CC-IN2P3 (France), KIT/GridKA (Germany), INFN-CNAF (Italy), NL-T1 (Netherlands), PIC (Spain), RAL (UK) and BNL (USA), the Tier-2 facilities worldwide and large non-WLCG resource providers. Major contributors of computing resources are listed in Ref. [73].

Appendix

The Z' mass resonance can be reconstructed either from m_{Z_1} or m_{Z_2} as shown in Figure 5, depending on the value of $m_{Z'}$.



(a) (b)

Figure 5: Comparison of data and post-fit SM prediction for: (a) the invariant mass of the leading $\mu^+\mu^-$ pair, m_{Z_1}, (b) the invariant mass of the sub-leading $\mu^+\mu^-$ pair, m_{Z_2}, in the SR. Two representative signals with masses of 19 GeV and 60 GeV are also overlaid, with the predicted yield scaled up by a factor of 50. The error bands include experimental and theoretical systematic uncertainties. The ratio of the data to the background ("Bkg.") prediction is shown in the lower panel.

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Soldatov [37], U. Soldevila [164], A.A. Solodkov [37], S. Solomon [26], A. Soloshenko [38], K. Solovieva [54], O.V. Solovyanov [40], V. Solovyev [37], P. Sommer [36], A. Sonay [13], W.Y. Song [157b], A. Sopczak [133], A.L. Sopio [97], F. Sopkova [28b], J.D. Sorenson [113], I.R. Sotarriva Alvarez [155], V. Sothilingam[63a], O.J. Soto Sandoval [138c,138b], S. Sottocornola [68], R. Soualah [161], Z. Soumaimi [35e], D. South [48], N. Soybelman [170], S. Spagnolo [70a,70b], M. Spalla [111], D. Sperlich [54], G. Spigo [36], S. Spinali [92], D.P. Spiteri [59], M. Spousta [134], E.J. Staats [34], R. Stamen [63a], A. Stampekis [20], M. Standke [24], E. Stanecka [87], M.V. Stange [50], B. Stanislaus [17a], M.M. Stanitzki [48], B. Stapf [48], E.A. Starchenko [37], G.H. Stark [137], J. Stark [90], P. Staroba [132], P. Starovoitov [63a], S. Stärz [105], R. Staszewski [87], G. Stavropoulos [46], J. Steentoft [162], P. Steinberg [29], B. Stelzer [143,157a], H.J. Stelzer [130], O. Stelzer-Chilton [157a], H. Stenzel [58], T.J. Stevenson [147], G.A. Stewart [36], J.R. Stewart [122], M.C. Stockton [36], G. Stoicea [27b], M. Stolarski [131a], S. Stonjek [111], A. Straessner [50], J. Strandberg [145], S. Strandberg [47a,47b], M. Stratmann [172], M. Strauss [121], T. Strebler [103], P. Strizenec [28b], R. Ströhmer [167], D.M. Strom [124], R. Stroynowski [44], A. Strubig [47a,47b], S.A. Stucci [29], B. Stugu [16], J. Stupak [121], N.A. Styles [48], D. Su [144], S. Su [62a], W. Su [62d], X. Su [62a], D. Suchy [28a], K. Sugizaki [154], V.V. Sulin [37], M.J. Sullivan [93], D.M.S. Sultan [127], L. Sultanaliyeva [37], S. Sultansoy [3b], T. Sumida [88], S. Sun [107], S. Sun [171], O. Sunneborn Gudnadottir [162], N. Sur [103], M.R. Sutton [147], H. Suzuki [158], M. Svatos [132], M. Swiatlowski [157a], T. Swirski [167], I. Sykora [28a], M. Sykora [134], T. Sykora [134], D. Ta [101], K. Tackmann [48,u], A. Taffard [160], R. Tafirout [157a], J.S. Tafoya Vargas [66], Y. Takubo [84], M. Talby [103], A.A. Talyshev [37], K.C. Tam [64b], N.M. Tamir[152], A. Tanaka [154], J. Tanaka [154], R. Tanaka [66], M. Tanasini [57b,57a], Z. Tao [165], S. Tapia Araya [138f], S. Tapprogge [101], A. Tarek Abouelfadl Mohamed [108], S. Tarem [151], K. Tariq [14a], G. Tarna [103,27b], G.F. Tartarelli [71a], P. Tas [134], M. Tasevsky [132], E. Tassi [43b,43a], A.C. Tate [163], G. Tateno [154], Y. Tayalati [35e,w], G.N. Taylor [106], W. Taylor [157b], A.S. Tee [171], R. Teixeira De Lima [144], P. Teixeira-Dias [96], J.J. Teoh [156], K. Terashi [154], J. Terron [100], S. Terzo [13], M. Testa [53], R.J. Teuscher [156,x], A. Thaler [79], O. Theiner [56],

N. Themistokleous [52], T. Theveneaux-Pelzer [103], O. Thielmann [172], D.W. Thomas[96], J.P. Thomas [20], E.A. Thompson [17a], P.D. Thompson [20], E. Thomson [129], R.E. Thornberry[44], Y. Tian [55], V. Tikhomirov [37,a], Yu.A. Tikhonov [37], S. Timoshenko[37], D. Timoshyn [134], E.X.L. Ting [1], P. Tipton [173], S.H. Tlou [33g], A. Tnourji [40], K. Todome [155], S. Todorova-Nova [134], S. Todt[50], M. Togawa [84], J. Tojo [89], S. Tokár [28a], K. Tokushuku [84], O. Toldaiev [68], R. Tombs [32], M. Tomoto [84,112], L. Tompkins [144,n], K.W. Topolnicki [86b], E. Torrence [124], H. Torres [90], E. Torró Pastor [164], M. Toscani [30], C. Tosciri [39], M. Tost [11], D.R. Tovey [140], A. Traeet[16], I.S. Trandafir [27b], T. Trefzger [167], A. Tricoli [29], I.M. Trigger [157a], S. Trincaz-Duvoid [128], D.A. Trischuk [26], B. Trocmé [60], L. Truong [33c], M. Trzebinski [87], A. Trzupek [87], F. Tsai [146], M. Tsai [107], A. Tsiamis [153,e], P.V. Tsiareshka[37], S. Tsigaridas [157a], A. Tsirigotis [153,s], V. Tsiskaridze [156], E.G. Tskhadadze [150a], M. Tsopoulou [153], Y. Tsujikawa [88], I.I. Tsukerman [37], V. Tsulaia [17a], S. Tsuno [84], K. Tsuri [119], D. Tsybychev [146], Y. Tu [64b], A. Tudorache [27b], V. Tudorache [27b], A.N. Tuna [61], S. Turchikhin [57b,57a], I. Turk Cakir [3a], R. Turra [71a], T. Turtuvshin [38,y], P.M. Tuts [41], S. Tzamarias [153,e], P. Tzanis [10], E. Tzovara [101], F. Ukegawa [158], P.A. Ulloa Poblete [138c,138b], E.N. Umaka [29], G. Unal [36], M. Unal [11], A. Undrus [29], G. Unel [160], J. Urban [28b], P. Urquijo [106], P. Urrejola [138a], G. Usai [8], R. Ushioda [155], M. Usman [109], Z. Uysal [82], V. Vacek [133], B. Vachon [105], K.O.H. Vadla [126], T. Vafeiadis [36], A. Vaitkus [97], C. Valderanis [110], E. Valdes Santurio [47a,47b], M. Valente [157a], S. Valentinetti [23b,23a], A. Valero [164], E. Valiente Moreno [164], A. Vallier [90], J.A. Valls Ferrer [164], D.R. Van Arneman [115], T.R. Van Daalen [139], A. Van Der Graaf [49], P. Van Gemmeren [6], M. Van Rijnbach [126], S. Van Stroud [97], I. Van Vulpen [115], P. Vana [134], M. Vanadia [76a,76b], W. Vandelli [36], E.R. Vandewall [122], D. Vannicola [152], L. Vannoli [57b,57a], R. Vari [75a], E.W. Varnes [7], C. Varni [17b], T. Varol [149], D. Varouchas [66], L. Varriale [164], K.E. Varvell [148], M.E. Vasile [27b], L. Vaslin[84], G.A. Vasquez [166], A. Vasyukov [38], R. Vavricka[101], F. Vazeille [40], T. Vazquez Schroeder [36], J. Veatch [31], V. Vecchio [102], M.J. Veen [104], I. Veliscek [29], L.M. Veloce [156], F. Veloso [131a,131c], S. Veneziano [75a], A. Ventura [70a,70b], S. Ventura Gonzalez [136], A. Verbytskyi [111], M. Verducci [74a,74b], C. Vergis [24], M. Verissimo De Araujo [83b], W. Verkerke [115], J.C. Vermeulen [115], C. Vernieri [144], M. Vessella [104], M.C. Vetterli [143,af], A. Vgenopoulos [153,e], N. Viaux Maira [138f], T. Vickey [140], O.E. Vickey Boeriu [140], G.H.A. Viehhauser [127], L. Vigani [63b], M. Villa [23b,23a], M. Villaplana Perez [164], E.M. Villhauer[52], E. Vilucchi [53], M.G. Vincter [34], G.S. Virdee [20], A. Vishwakarma [52], A. Visibile[115], C. Vittori [36], I. Vivarelli [23b,23a], E. Voevodina [111], F. Vogel [110], J.C. Voigt [50], P. Vokac [133], Yu. Volkotrub [86a], J. Von Ahnen [48], E. Von Toerne [24], B. Vormwald [36], V. Vorobel [134], K. Vorobev [37], M. Vos [164], K. Voss [142], M. Vozak [115], L. Vozdecky [121], N. Vranjes [15], M. Vranjes Milosavljevic [15], M. Vreeswijk [115], N.K. Vu [62d,62c], R. Vuillermet [36], O. Vujinovic [101], I. Vukotic [39], S. Wada [158], C. Wagner[104], J.M. Wagner [17a], W. Wagner [172], S. Wahdan [172], H. Wahlberg [91], M. Wakida [112], J. Walder [135], R. Walker [110], W. Walkowiak [142], A. Wall [129], E.J. Wallin [99], T. Wamorkar [6], A.Z. Wang [137], C. Wang [101], C. Wang [11], H. Wang [17a], J. Wang [64c], R.-J. Wang [101], R. Wang [61], R. Wang [6], S.M. Wang [149], S. Wang [62b], T. Wang [62a], W.T. Wang [80],

W. Wang [14a], X. Wang [14c], X. Wang [163], X. Wang [62c], Y. Wang [62d], Y. Wang [14c], Z. Wang [107], Z. Wang [62d,51,62c], Z. Wang [107], A. Warburton [105], R.J. Ward [20], N. Warrack [59], S. Waterhouse [96], A.T. Watson [20], H. Watson [59], M.F. Watson [20], E. Watton [59,135], G. Watts [139], B.M. Waugh [97], C. Weber [29], H.A. Weber [18], M.S. Weber [19], S.M. Weber [63a], C. Wei [62a], Y. Wei [127], A.R. Weidberg [127], E.J. Weik [118], J. Weingarten [49], M. Weirich [101], C. Weiser [54], C.J. Wells [48], T. Wenaus [29], B. Wendland [49], T. Wengler [36], N.S. Wenke[111], N. Wermes [24], M. Wessels [63a], A.M. Wharton [92], A.S. White [61], A. White [8], M.J. White [1], D. Whiteson [160], L. Wickremasinghe [125], W. Wiedenmann [171], M. Wielers [135], C. Wiglesworth [42], D.J. Wilbern[121], H.G. Wilkens [36], D.M. Williams [41], H.H. Williams[129], S. Williams [32], S. Willocq [104], B.J. Wilson [102], P.J. Windischhofer [39], F.I. Winkel [30], F. Winklmeier [124], B.T. Winter [54], J.K. Winter [102], M. Wittgen[144], M. Wobisch [98], Z. Wolffs [115], J. Wollrath[160], M.W. Wolter [87], H. Wolters [131a,131c], M.C. Wong[137], E.L. Woodward [41], S.D. Worm [48], B.K. Wosiek [87], K.W. Woźniak [87], S. Wozniewski [55], K. Wraight [59], C. Wu [20], M. Wu [14d], M. Wu [114], S.L. Wu [171], X. Wu [56], Y. Wu [62a], Z. Wu [136], J. Wuerzinger [111,ad], T.R. Wyatt [102], B.M. Wynne [52], S. Xella [42], L. Xia [14c], M. Xia [14b], J. Xiang [64c], M. Xie [62a], X. Xie [62a], S. Xin [14a,14e], A. Xiong [124], J. Xiong [17a], D. Xu [14a], H. Xu [62a], L. Xu [62a], R. Xu [129], T. Xu [107], Y. Xu [14b], Z. Xu [52], Z. Xu[14c], B. Yabsley [148], S. Yacoob [33a], Y. Yamaguchi [155], E. Yamashita [154], H. Yamauchi [158], T. Yamazaki [17a], Y. Yamazaki [85], J. Yan[62c], S. Yan [59], Z. Yan [104], H.J. Yang [62c,62d], H.T. Yang [62a], S. Yang [62a], T. Yang [64c], X. Yang [36], X. Yang [14a], Y. Yang [44], Y. Yang[62a], Z. Yang [62a], W-M. Yao [17a], H. Ye [14c], H. Ye [55], J. Ye [14a], S. Ye [29], X. Ye [62a], Y. Yeh [97], I. Yeletskikh [38], B.K. Yeo [17b], M.R. Yexley [97], P. Yin [41], K. Yorita [169], S. Younas [27b], C.J.S. Young [36], C. Young [144], C. Yu [14a,14e], Y. Yu [62a], M. Yuan [107], R. Yuan [62b], L. Yue [97], M. Zaazoua [62a], B. Zabinski [87], E. Zaid[52], Z.K. Zak [87], T. Zakareishvili [164], N. Zakharchuk [34], S. Zambito [56], J.A. Zamora Saa [138d,138b], J. Zang [154], D. Zanzi [54], O. Zaplatilek [133], C. Zeitnitz [172], H. Zeng [14a], J.C. Zeng [163], D.T. Zenger Jr [26], O. Zenin [37], T. Ženiš [28a], S. Zenz [95], S. Zerradi [35a], D. Zerwas [66], M. Zhai [14a,14e], D.F. Zhang [140], J. Zhang [62b], J. Zhang [6], K. Zhang [14a,14e], L. Zhang [14c], P. Zhang [14a,14e], R. Zhang [171], S. Zhang [107], S. Zhang [44], T. Zhang [154], X. Zhang [62c], X. Zhang [62b], Y. Zhang [62c,5], Y. Zhang [97], Y. Zhang [14c], Z. Zhang [17a], Z. Zhang [66], H. Zhao [139], T. Zhao [62b], Y. Zhao [137], Z. Zhao [62a], A. Zhemchugov [38], J. Zheng [14c], K. Zheng [163], X. Zheng [62a], Z. Zheng [144], D. Zhong [163], B. Zhou [107], H. Zhou [7], N. Zhou [62c], Y. Zhou [14c], Y. Zhou[7], C.G. Zhu [62b], J. Zhu [107], Y. Zhu [62c], Y. Zhu [62a], X. Zhuang [14a], K. Zhukov [37], N.I. Zimine [38], J. Zinsser [63b], M. Ziolkowski [142], L. Živković [15], A. Zoccoli [23b,23a], K. Zoch [61], T.G. Zorbas [140], O. Zormpa [46], W. Zou [41], L. Zwalinski [36].

[1]Department of Physics, University of Adelaide, Adelaide; Australia.
[2]Department of Physics, University of Alberta, Edmonton AB; Canada.
[3] $^{(a)}$Department of Physics, Ankara University, Ankara; $^{(b)}$Division of Physics, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara; Türkiye.
[4]LAPP, Université Savoie Mont Blanc, CNRS/IN2P3, Annecy; France.

[5]APC, Université Paris Cité, CNRS/IN2P3, Paris; France.
[6]High Energy Physics Division, Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne IL; United States of America.
[7]Department of Physics, University of Arizona, Tucson AZ; United States of America.
[8]Department of Physics, University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington TX; United States of America.
[9]Physics Department, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens; Greece.
[10]Physics Department, National Technical University of Athens, Zografou; Greece.
[11]Department of Physics, University of Texas at Austin, Austin TX; United States of America.
[12]Institute of Physics, Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Baku; Azerbaijan.
[13]Institut de Física d'Altes Energies (IFAE), Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology, Barcelona; Spain.
[14(a)]Institute of High Energy Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing;[(b)]Physics Department, Tsinghua University, Beijing;[(c)]Department of Physics, Nanjing University, Nanjing;[(d)]School of Science, Shenzhen Campus of Sun Yat-sen University;[(e)]University of Chinese Academy of Science (UCAS), Beijing; China.
[15]Institute of Physics, University of Belgrade, Belgrade; Serbia.
[16]Department for Physics and Technology, University of Bergen, Bergen; Norway.
[17(a)]Physics Division, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley CA;[(b)]University of California, Berkeley CA; United States of America.
[18]Institut für Physik, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Berlin; Germany.
[19]Albert Einstein Center for Fundamental Physics and Laboratory for High Energy Physics, University of Bern, Bern; Switzerland.
[20]School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Birmingham, Birmingham; United Kingdom.
[21(a)]Department of Physics, Bogazici University, Istanbul;[(b)]Department of Physics Engineering, Gaziantep University, Gaziantep;[(c)]Department of Physics, Istanbul University, Istanbul; Türkiye.
[22(a)]Facultad de Ciencias y Centro de Investigaciónes, Universidad Antonio Nariño, Bogotá;[(b)]Departamento de Física, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá; Colombia.
[23(a)]Dipartimento di Fisica e Astronomia A. Righi, Università di Bologna, Bologna;[(b)]INFN Sezione di Bologna; Italy.
[24]Physikalisches Institut, Universität Bonn, Bonn; Germany.
[25]Department of Physics, Boston University, Boston MA; United States of America.
[26]Department of Physics, Brandeis University, Waltham MA; United States of America.
[27(a)]Transilvania University of Brasov, Brasov;[(b)]Horia Hulubei National Institute of Physics and Nuclear Engineering, Bucharest;[(c)]Department of Physics, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Iasi;[(d)]National Institute for Research and Development of Isotopic and Molecular Technologies, Physics Department, Cluj-Napoca;[(e)]National University of Science and Technology Politechnica, Bucharest;[(f)]West University in Timisoara, Timisoara;[(g)]Faculty of Physics, University of Bucharest, Bucharest; Romania.
[28(a)]Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics, Comenius University, Bratislava;[(b)]Department of Subnuclear Physics, Institute of Experimental Physics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Kosice; Slovak Republic.
[29]Physics Department, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton NY; United States of America.

[30]Universidad de Buenos Aires, Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales, Departamento de Física, y CONICET, Instituto de Física de Buenos Aires (IFIBA), Buenos Aires; Argentina.
[31]California State University, CA; United States of America.
[32]Cavendish Laboratory, University of Cambridge, Cambridge; United Kingdom.
[33](a)Department of Physics, University of Cape Town, Cape Town;(b)iThemba Labs, Western Cape;(c)Department of Mechanical Engineering Science, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg;(d)National Institute of Physics, University of the Philippines Diliman (Philippines);(e)University of South Africa, Department of Physics, Pretoria;(f)University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa;(g)School of Physics, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; South Africa.
[34]Department of Physics, Carleton University, Ottawa ON; Canada.
[35](a)Faculté des Sciences Ain Chock, Réseau Universitaire de Physique des Hautes Energies - Université Hassan II, Casablanca;(b)Faculté des Sciences, Université Ibn-Tofail, Kénitra;(c)Faculté des Sciences Semlalia, Université Cadi Ayyad, LPHEA-Marrakech;(d)LPMR, Faculté des Sciences, Université Mohamed Premier, Oujda;(e)Faculté des sciences, Université Mohammed V, Rabat;(f)Institute of Applied Physics, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Ben Guerir; Morocco.
[36]CERN, Geneva; Switzerland.
[37]Affiliated with an institute covered by a cooperation agreement with CERN.
[38]Affiliated with an international laboratory covered by a cooperation agreement with CERN.
[39]Enrico Fermi Institute, University of Chicago, Chicago IL; United States of America.
[40]LPC, Université Clermont Auvergne, CNRS/IN2P3, Clermont-Ferrand; France.
[41]Nevis Laboratory, Columbia University, Irvington NY; United States of America.
[42]Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen; Denmark.
[43](a)Dipartimento di Fisica, Università della Calabria, Rende;(b)INFN Gruppo Collegato di Cosenza, Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati; Italy.
[44]Physics Department, Southern Methodist University, Dallas TX; United States of America.
[45]Physics Department, University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson TX; United States of America.
[46]National Centre for Scientific Research "Demokritos", Agia Paraskevi; Greece.
[47](a)Department of Physics, Stockholm University;(b)Oskar Klein Centre, Stockholm; Sweden.
[48]Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron DESY, Hamburg and Zeuthen; Germany.
[49]Fakultät Physik , Technische Universität Dortmund, Dortmund; Germany.
[50]Institut für Kern- und Teilchenphysik, Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden; Germany.
[51]Department of Physics, Duke University, Durham NC; United States of America.
[52]SUPA - School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh; United Kingdom.
[53]INFN e Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, Frascati; Italy.
[54]Physikalisches Institut, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Freiburg; Germany.
[55]II. Physikalisches Institut, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Göttingen; Germany.
[56]Département de Physique Nucléaire et Corpusculaire, Université de Genève, Genève; Switzerland.
[57](a)Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Genova, Genova;(b)INFN Sezione di Genova; Italy.
[58]II. Physikalisches Institut, Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen, Giessen; Germany.

[59]SUPA - School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Glasgow, Glasgow; United Kingdom.
[60]LPSC, Université Grenoble Alpes, CNRS/IN2P3, Grenoble INP, Grenoble; France.
[61]Laboratory for Particle Physics and Cosmology, Harvard University, Cambridge MA; United States of America.
[62][(a)]Department of Modern Physics and State Key Laboratory of Particle Detection and Electronics, University of Science and Technology of China, Hefei;[(b)]Institute of Frontier and Interdisciplinary Science and Key Laboratory of Particle Physics and Particle Irradiation (MOE), Shandong University, Qingdao;[(c)]School of Physics and Astronomy, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Key Laboratory for Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology (MOE), SKLPPC, Shanghai;[(d)]Tsung-Dao Lee Institute, Shanghai;[(e)]School of Physics and Microelectronics, Zhengzhou University; China.
[63][(a)]Kirchhoff-Institut für Physik, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg;[(b)]Physikalisches Institut, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg; Germany.
[64][(a)]Department of Physics, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong;[(b)]Department of Physics, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong;[(c)]Department of Physics and Institute for Advanced Study, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Clear Water Bay, Kowloon, Hong Kong; China.
[65]Department of Physics, National Tsing Hua University, Hsinchu; Taiwan.
[66]IJCLab, Université Paris-Saclay, CNRS/IN2P3, 91405, Orsay; France.
[67]Centro Nacional de Microelectrónica (IMB-CNM-CSIC), Barcelona; Spain.
[68]Department of Physics, Indiana University, Bloomington IN; United States of America.
[69][(a)]INFN Gruppo Collegato di Udine, Sezione di Trieste, Udine;[(b)]ICTP, Trieste;[(c)]Dipartimento Politecnico di Ingegneria e Architettura, Università di Udine, Udine; Italy.
[70][(a)]INFN Sezione di Lecce;[(b)]Dipartimento di Matematica e Fisica, Università del Salento, Lecce; Italy.
[71][(a)]INFN Sezione di Milano;[(b)]Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Milano, Milano; Italy.
[72][(a)]INFN Sezione di Napoli;[(b)]Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Napoli, Napoli; Italy.
[73][(a)]INFN Sezione di Pavia;[(b)]Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Pavia, Pavia; Italy.
[74][(a)]INFN Sezione di Pisa;[(b)]Dipartimento di Fisica E. Fermi, Università di Pisa, Pisa; Italy.
[75][(a)]INFN Sezione di Roma;[(b)]Dipartimento di Fisica, Sapienza Università di Roma, Roma; Italy.
[76][(a)]INFN Sezione di Roma Tor Vergata;[(b)]Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Roma Tor Vergata, Roma; Italy.
[77][(a)]INFN Sezione di Roma Tre;[(b)]Dipartimento di Matematica e Fisica, Università Roma Tre, Roma; Italy.
[78][(a)]INFN-TIFPA;[(b)]Università degli Studi di Trento, Trento; Italy.
[79]Universität Innsbruck, Department of Astro and Particle Physics, Innsbruck; Austria.
[80]University of Iowa, Iowa City IA; United States of America.
[81]Department of Physics and Astronomy, Iowa State University, Ames IA; United States of America.
[82]Istinye University, Sariyer, Istanbul; Türkiye.

[83(a)]Departamento de Engenharia Elétrica, Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora (UFJF), Juiz de Fora;[(b)]Universidade Federal do Rio De Janeiro COPPE/EE/IF, Rio de Janeiro;[(c)]Instituto de Física, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo;[(d)]Rio de Janeiro State University, Rio de Janeiro;[(e)]Federal University of Bahia, Bahia; Brazil.
[84]KEK, High Energy Accelerator Research Organization, Tsukuba; Japan.
[85]Graduate School of Science, Kobe University, Kobe; Japan.
[86(a)]AGH University of Krakow, Faculty of Physics and Applied Computer Science, Krakow;[(b)]Marian Smoluchowski Institute of Physics, Jagiellonian University, Krakow; Poland.
[87]Institute of Nuclear Physics Polish Academy of Sciences, Krakow; Poland.
[88]Faculty of Science, Kyoto University, Kyoto; Japan.
[89]Research Center for Advanced Particle Physics and Department of Physics, Kyushu University, Fukuoka ; Japan.
[90]L2IT, Université de Toulouse, CNRS/IN2P3, UPS, Toulouse; France.
[91]Instituto de Física La Plata, Universidad Nacional de La Plata and CONICET, La Plata; Argentina.
[92]Physics Department, Lancaster University, Lancaster; United Kingdom.
[93]Oliver Lodge Laboratory, University of Liverpool, Liverpool; United Kingdom.
[94]Department of Experimental Particle Physics, Jožef Stefan Institute and Department of Physics, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana; Slovenia.
[95]School of Physics and Astronomy, Queen Mary University of London, London; United Kingdom.
[96]Department of Physics, Royal Holloway University of London, Egham; United Kingdom.
[97]Department of Physics and Astronomy, University College London, London; United Kingdom.
[98]Louisiana Tech University, Ruston LA; United States of America.
[99]Fysiska institutionen, Lunds universitet, Lund; Sweden.
[100]Departamento de Física Teorica C-15 and CIAFF, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid; Spain.
[101]Institut für Physik, Universität Mainz, Mainz; Germany.
[102]School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Manchester, Manchester; United Kingdom.
[103]CPPM, Aix-Marseille Université, CNRS/IN2P3, Marseille; France.
[104]Department of Physics, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA; United States of America.
[105]Department of Physics, McGill University, Montreal QC; Canada.
[106]School of Physics, University of Melbourne, Victoria; Australia.
[107]Department of Physics, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor MI; United States of America.
[108]Department of Physics and Astronomy, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI; United States of America.
[109]Group of Particle Physics, University of Montreal, Montreal QC; Canada.
[110]Fakultät für Physik, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, München; Germany.
[111]Max-Planck-Institut für Physik (Werner-Heisenberg-Institut), München; Germany.
[112]Graduate School of Science and Kobayashi-Maskawa Institute, Nagoya University, Nagoya; Japan.
[113]Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque NM; United States of America.

[114]Institute for Mathematics, Astrophysics and Particle Physics, Radboud University/Nikhef, Nijmegen; Netherlands.
[115]Nikhef National Institute for Subatomic Physics and University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam; Netherlands.
[116]Department of Physics, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb IL; United States of America.
[117(a)]New York University Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi;[(b)]United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain; United Arab Emirates.
[118]Department of Physics, New York University, New York NY; United States of America.
[119]Ochanomizu University, Otsuka, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo; Japan.
[120]Ohio State University, Columbus OH; United States of America.
[121]Homer L. Dodge Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Oklahoma, Norman OK; United States of America.
[122]Department of Physics, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater OK; United States of America.
[123]Palacký University, Joint Laboratory of Optics, Olomouc; Czech Republic.
[124]Institute for Fundamental Science, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR; United States of America.
[125]Graduate School of Science, Osaka University, Osaka; Japan.
[126]Department of Physics, University of Oslo, Oslo; Norway.
[127]Department of Physics, Oxford University, Oxford; United Kingdom.
[128]LPNHE, Sorbonne Université, Université Paris Cité, CNRS/IN2P3, Paris; France.
[129]Department of Physics, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia PA; United States of America.
[130]Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA; United States of America.
[131(a)]Laboratório de Instrumentação e Física Experimental de Partículas - LIP, Lisboa;[(b)]Departamento de Física, Faculdade de Ciências, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa;[(c)]Departamento de Física, Universidade de Coimbra, Coimbra;[(d)]Centro de Física Nuclear da Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa;[(e)]Departamento de Física, Universidade do Minho, Braga;[(f)]Departamento de Física Teórica y del Cosmos, Universidad de Granada, Granada (Spain);[(g)]Departamento de Física, Instituto Superior Técnico, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa; Portugal.
[132]Institute of Physics of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague; Czech Republic.
[133]Czech Technical University in Prague, Prague; Czech Republic.
[134]Charles University, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, Prague; Czech Republic.
[135]Particle Physics Department, Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Didcot; United Kingdom.
[136]IRFU, CEA, Université Paris-Saclay, Gif-sur-Yvette; France.
[137]Santa Cruz Institute for Particle Physics, University of California Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz CA; United States of America.
[138(a)]Departamento de Física, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago;[(b)]Millennium Institute for Subatomic physics at high energy frontier (SAPHIR), Santiago;[(c)]Instituto de Investigación Multidisciplinario en Ciencia y Tecnología, y Departamento de Física, Universidad de La Serena;[(d)]Universidad Andres Bello, Department of Physics, Santiago;[(e)]Instituto de Alta Investigación, Universidad de Tarapacá, Arica;[(f)]Departamento de Física, Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, Valparaíso; Chile.

[139]Department of Physics, University of Washington, Seattle WA; United States of America.
[140]Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Sheffield, Sheffield; United Kingdom.
[141]Department of Physics, Shinshu University, Nagano; Japan.
[142]Department Physik, Universität Siegen, Siegen; Germany.
[143]Department of Physics, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby BC; Canada.
[144]SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, Stanford CA; United States of America.
[145]Department of Physics, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm; Sweden.
[146]Departments of Physics and Astronomy, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook NY; United States of America.
[147]Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Sussex, Brighton; United Kingdom.
[148]School of Physics, University of Sydney, Sydney; Australia.
[149]Institute of Physics, Academia Sinica, Taipei; Taiwan.
[150][(a)]E. Andronikashvili Institute of Physics, Iv. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi;[(b)]High Energy Physics Institute, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi;[(c)]University of Georgia, Tbilisi; Georgia.
[151]Department of Physics, Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa; Israel.
[152]Raymond and Beverly Sackler School of Physics and Astronomy, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv; Israel.
[153]Department of Physics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki; Greece.
[154]International Center for Elementary Particle Physics and Department of Physics, University of Tokyo, Tokyo; Japan.
[155]Department of Physics, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Tokyo; Japan.
[156]Department of Physics, University of Toronto, Toronto ON; Canada.
[157][(a)]TRIUMF, Vancouver BC;[(b)]Department of Physics and Astronomy, York University, Toronto ON; Canada.
[158]Division of Physics and Tomonaga Center for the History of the Universe, Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba; Japan.
[159]Department of Physics and Astronomy, Tufts University, Medford MA; United States of America.
[160]Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of California Irvine, Irvine CA; United States of America.
[161]University of Sharjah, Sharjah; United Arab Emirates.
[162]Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Uppsala, Uppsala; Sweden.
[163]Department of Physics, University of Illinois, Urbana IL; United States of America.
[164]Instituto de Física Corpuscular (IFIC), Centro Mixto Universidad de Valencia - CSIC, Valencia; Spain.
[165]Department of Physics, University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC; Canada.
[166]Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Victoria, Victoria BC; Canada.
[167]Fakultät für Physik und Astronomie, Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg, Würzburg; Germany.
[168]Department of Physics, University of Warwick, Coventry; United Kingdom.
[169]Waseda University, Tokyo; Japan.
[170]Department of Particle Physics and Astrophysics, Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot;

Israel.
[171]Department of Physics, University of Wisconsin, Madison WI; United States of America.
[172]Fakultät für Mathematik und Naturwissenschaften, Fachgruppe Physik, Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Wuppertal; Germany.
[173]Department of Physics, Yale University, New Haven CT; United States of America.
[a] Also Affiliated with an institute covered by a cooperation agreement with CERN.
[b] Also at An-Najah National University, Nablus; Palestine.
[c] Also at Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York, New York NY; United States of America.
[d] Also at Center for High Energy Physics, Peking University; China.
[e] Also at Center for Interdisciplinary Research and Innovation (CIRI-AUTH), Thessaloniki; Greece.
[f] Also at Centro Studi e Ricerche Enrico Fermi; Italy.
[g] Also at CERN, Geneva; Switzerland.
[h] Also at Département de Physique Nucléaire et Corpusculaire, Université de Genève, Genève; Switzerland.
[i] Also at Departament de Fisica de la Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Barcelona; Spain.
[j] Also at Department of Financial and Management Engineering, University of the Aegean, Chios; Greece.
[k] Also at Department of Physics, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva; Israel.
[l] Also at Department of Physics, California State University, Sacramento; United States of America.
[m] Also at Department of Physics, King's College London, London; United Kingdom.
[n] Also at Department of Physics, Stanford University, Stanford CA; United States of America.
[o] Also at Department of Physics, Stellenbosch University; South Africa.
[p] Also at Department of Physics, University of Fribourg, Fribourg; Switzerland.
[q] Also at Department of Physics, University of Thessaly; Greece.
[r] Also at Department of Physics, Westmont College, Santa Barbara; United States of America.
[s] Also at Hellenic Open University, Patras; Greece.
[t] Also at Institucio Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avancats, ICREA, Barcelona; Spain.
[u] Also at Institut für Experimentalphysik, Universität Hamburg, Hamburg; Germany.
[v] Also at Institute for Nuclear Research and Nuclear Energy (INRNE) of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia; Bulgaria.
[w] Also at Institute of Applied Physics, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Ben Guerir; Morocco.
[x] Also at Institute of Particle Physics (IPP); Canada.
[y] Also at Institute of Physics and Technology, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Ulaanbaatar; Mongolia.
[z] Also at Institute of Physics, Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Baku; Azerbaijan.
[aa] Also at Institute of Theoretical Physics, Ilia State University, Tbilisi; Georgia.
[ab] Also at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore; United States of America.
[ac] Also at National Institute of Physics, University of the Philippines Diliman (Philippines); Philippines.

[ad] Also at Technical University of Munich, Munich; Germany.
[ae] Also at The Collaborative Innovation Center of Quantum Matter (CICQM), Beijing; China.
[af] Also at TRIUMF, Vancouver BC; Canada.
[ag] Also at Università di Napoli Parthenope, Napoli; Italy.
[ah] Also at University of Colorado Boulder, Department of Physics, Colorado; United States of America.
[ai] Also at Washington College, Chestertown, MD; United States of America.
[aj] Also at Yeditepe University, Physics Department, Istanbul; Türkiye.
[*] Deceased