



Study of W boson production in pPb collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV



CMS Collaboration*

CERN, Switzerland

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ABSTRACT

The first study of W boson production in pPb collisions is presented, for bosons decaying to a muon or electron, and a neutrino. The measurements are based on a data sample corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 34.6 nb^{-1} at a nucleon–nucleon centre-of-mass energy of $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV, collected by the CMS experiment. The W boson differential cross sections, lepton charge asymmetry, and forward–backward asymmetries are measured for leptons of transverse momentum exceeding $25 \text{ GeV}/c$, and as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity in the $|\eta_{\text{lab}}| < 2.4$ range. Deviations from the expectations based on currently available parton distribution functions are observed, showing the need for including W boson data in nuclear parton distribution global fits.

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1. Introduction

Electroweak boson production in proton–nucleus and nucleus–nucleus collisions at the CERN LHC offers a unique opportunity to probe nuclear parton distribution functions (nPDFs) [1–4]. Leptonic decays of electroweak bosons are of particular interest since leptons do not interact strongly with the medium produced in these collisions [5,6]. As compared to those in a proton, the nPDFs are expected to be depleted (*shadowing*) for partons carrying small momentum fractions $x \lesssim 10^{-2}$, and enhanced (*anti-shadowing*) in the $5 \times 10^{-2} \lesssim x \lesssim 10^{-1}$ range [7]. However, because of the lack of available data, parton densities are less precisely known for nuclei than for nucleons. As a consequence, precise calculations describing hard processes in high-energy heavy ion collisions are limited by uncertainties in the nPDFs. For W boson production, the dominant processes at LHC energies are $u\bar{d} \rightarrow W^+$ and $d\bar{u} \rightarrow W^-$, principally reflecting interactions that take place between valence quarks and sea antiquarks. According to Ref. [4], PDF nuclear modifications could affect the yield of W bosons in pPb collisions at the LHC by as much as 15% in certain kinematic regions. Therefore, precise measurements of W boson production in heavy ion collisions might lead to an improved determination of the nPDFs. Moreover, asymmetries in the individual yields of W^+ and W^- should permit the flavour decomposition of u and d quark distributions in nuclei.

The ATLAS [8,9] and CMS [10,11] Collaborations reported the observations of Z bosons in heavy ion interactions, at a centre-

of-mass energy of 2.76 TeV per nucleon pair. These data showed that the Z boson yields per nucleon–nucleon (NN) collision are essentially unmodified by the medium produced in the collisions. Although W bosons decaying to a lepton and a neutrino are more difficult to detect, their rate is about ten times larger than that of Z bosons decaying to leptonic final states. The production of W bosons in PbPb collisions was reported by CMS [12] and ATLAS [13], using data corresponding to an integrated luminosity of $7.3 \mu\text{b}^{-1}$ and $150 \mu\text{b}^{-1}$, collected in 2010 and 2011, respectively. The W boson yield per NN collision was shown to be compatible with the one measured in pp collisions, when taking into account isospin effects arising from the mixture of protons and neutrons in the colliding nuclei. However, the presence of 10–20% nPDF effects on Z and W boson production could not be excluded due to the relatively large experimental and theoretical uncertainties of these results.

The 2013 pPb LHC run provides the best currently available data sample to look for initial-state effects (such as PDF modifications) using electroweak bosons. The NN-equivalent luminosity is of the same order of magnitude as for the 2011 PbPb run, and the production cross sections are approximately a factor of two greater owing to the increased energy, 5.02 TeV per nucleon pair. Furthermore, the asymmetry of the pPb collision system allows for the measurement of other observables such as forward–backward pseudorapidity asymmetries. This Letter reports a study of W boson production in a sample of pPb collisions corresponding to an integrated luminosity of $(34.6 \pm 1.2) \text{ nb}^{-1}$ [14], collected by the CMS experiment.

* E-mail address: cms-publication-committee-chair@cern.ch.

2. Experimental methods

The direction of the proton beam was initially opposite to the positive direction of the CMS longitudinal axis [15], and was reversed after 60% of the data were taken. The beam energies were 4 TeV for protons and 1.58 TeV per nucleon for lead nuclei, resulting in a centre-of-mass energy per nucleon pair of $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV. As a result of the energy difference of the colliding beams, the NN centre-of-mass frame in pPb collisions was not at rest with respect to the laboratory frame. Massless particles emitted at pseudorapidity η in the NN centre-of-mass frame are detected at $\eta_{lab} = \eta - 0.465$ (first proton beam orientation) and $\eta_{lab} = \eta + 0.465$ (second proton beam orientation) in the CMS coordinate system, as defined in Ref. [15]. The results presented hereafter are expressed in the usual convention of the proton-going side defining the positive pseudorapidity. It coincides with the CMS convention in the second period of data taking, the first one being reversed before summing yields from the two beam configurations.

A detailed description of the CMS detector can be found elsewhere [15]. Its central feature is a superconducting solenoid of 6 m internal diameter, providing a magnetic field of 3.8 T. Within the field volume are the silicon pixel-and-strip tracker, a lead tungstate crystal electromagnetic calorimeter (ECAL), and a brass and scintillator hadron calorimeter (HCAL), each composed of a barrel and two endcap sections. The silicon tracker consists of 66 M pixel and 10 M strip sensor elements, and measures charged-particle trajectories in the pseudorapidity range $|\eta_{lab}| < 2.5$. Outside of the solenoid, muons are detected in the $|\eta_{lab}| < 2.4$ range, with gas-ionization detector planes based on three technologies: drift tubes, cathode strip chambers, and resistive-plate chambers. Electrons are identified in the ECAL, which is made of 75 848 lead tungstate crystals and covers $|\eta_{lab}| < 1.48$ in the barrel and $1.48 < |\eta_{lab}| < 3.00$ in the two endcap regions. The CMS apparatus also has extensive forward calorimetry, including two steel/quartz-fiber Cherenkov hadron forward (HF) calorimeters, which cover the $2.9 < |\eta_{lab}| < 5.2$ range. For online event selection, CMS uses a two-level trigger system.

Selection criteria similar to the ones developed in Ref. [16] are applied to the pPb sample to remove events with electromagnetic, beam-gas, or multiple collisions (pileup). The W boson yields are corrected for the induced $(4.0 \pm 0.5)\%$ signal loss.

The primary signature of a W boson is a high transverse momentum (p_T) lepton. The current analysis is restricted to leptons of p_T greater than 25 GeV/c. The muon analysis is based on a sample triggered by requiring a single muon with p_T above 12 GeV/c, while the electron analysis uses an ECAL-triggered sample with a transverse energy threshold of 15 GeV. Leptons are reconstructed with the same algorithms as in proton–proton collisions [17,18], and standard selection criteria are applied, as in Refs. [12,19]. A special electron charge determination, as described in Ref. [20], is used in order to reduce the electron charge misidentification to a sub-percent level. Events are reconstructed using particle-flow (PF) techniques [21,22], which reconstruct and classify individual particles with an optimised combination of all subdetector information.

Two criteria are used to remove specific background sources. First, events with two oppositely charged leptons, with the second lepton p_T greater than 15 (10) GeV/c for muons (electrons) are removed, since they correspond to well-identified processes like Drell–Yan, Z boson or high- p_T quarkonium production. Second, the leptons are required to be isolated, in order to reduce the contamination coming from jet fragmentation. The energies of all PF candidates are summed within a cone centred around the lepton, with the exception of the lepton itself. The lepton is considered isolated if the total transverse energy in the cone is small com-

pared to its transverse momentum. For muons, a cone of radius $\Delta R = \sqrt{(\Delta\eta)^2 + (\Delta\phi)^2} = 0.3$ is used, where $\Delta\eta$ and $\Delta\phi$ are the pseudorapidity and azimuthal distances to the lepton. The candidate is rejected if the in-cone transverse energy is greater than 10% of the muon p_T . For electrons, a cone of $\Delta R = 0.4$ is used, and only particles with p_T greater than 1 GeV/c are summed, to reduce the underlying-event enhanced contribution. The electron candidate is rejected if the resulting transverse energy is greater than 11.5% (9.5%) of the electron $4p_T$, for the ECAL barrel (endcaps).

An important characteristic of events containing a $W \rightarrow \ell\nu$ decay is the missing transverse energy (\cancel{E}_T) associated with the undetected neutrino. It is computed as the magnitude of the vectorial sum of transverse momenta of all the PF candidates in the event. The analysis is performed using ten lepton pseudorapidity bins, each 0.5 wide except for the most forward and backward regions ($2 < |\eta_{lab}| < 2.4$). After having applied the lepton selection criteria, examples of the resulting \cancel{E}_T distributions are shown in Fig. 1 for μ^+ and e^+ , in the most central ($-0.5 < \eta_{lab} < 0.0$) and furthest forward ($2.0 < \eta_{lab} < 2.4$) ranges. The distributions for other bins and for the negative leptons are similar.

To extract the number of events with a lepton coming from a W boson, binned fits of these distributions are performed, including the signal and main background contributions, in each η_{lab} bin. The \cancel{E}_T shapes assumed for the electroweak processes, namely the $W^\pm \rightarrow \ell^\pm\nu$ signal as well as background from $W^\pm \rightarrow \tau^\pm\nu$ and $Z \rightarrow \ell^+\ell^-$, are determined by the simulations described hereafter, taking into account the acceptance and efficiency. Their relative normalization is given by the unmodified theoretical cross sections (as computed in Ref. [23]). A maximal 20% variation of the W/Z normalization ratio is taken into account, due to potentially different nuclear modifications of the Z and W bosons, and resulting in a 1–3% systematic uncertainty in the extracted W yields. The noticeable difference between the \cancel{E}_T distributions for the $Z \rightarrow e^+e^-$ and $Z \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-$ processes in the forward region (bottom plots of Fig. 1) results from the greater ECAL coverage allowing missed electrons with $2.4 < |\eta_{lab}| < 3.0$ to be accounted for in the \cancel{E}_T calculation. The shape of the QCD multijet background is modelled by the functional form $f(\cancel{E}_T) = (\cancel{E}_T + \cancel{E}_T^0)^\alpha \exp(\beta\sqrt{\cancel{E}_T + \cancel{E}_T^0})$. It is shown to reproduce the \cancel{E}_T shape of data events containing non-isolated leptons, with the \cancel{E}_T^0 , α , and β parameters, which are observed to depend mildly and linearly on the cone/lepton transverse energy ratio. These fitted parameters are then extrapolated to the isolated lepton signal regime and the resulting function is used as the QCD background shape. The multijet background contribution is larger in the electron channel because the misidentified lepton rate is higher, particularly due to a contribution from photon-jet events. Contributions from other sources, such as $t\bar{t}$ production and high- p_T quarkonia, were found to be negligible.

A small charge misidentification correction (less than 0.2%) is applied to the electron yields; this correction is negligible for muons. All fits are of good quality, as illustrated by the bottom panels of Fig. 1 that show the ratio of the data to the fit outcome. The observed numbers of leptons coming from W boson decays over the entire pseudorapidity range are: $11\,660 \pm 111 \mu^+$, $9459 \pm 99 \mu^-$, $9892 \pm 116 e^+$, and $7872 \pm 101 e^-$, where the uncertainty is statistical, determined by the fit procedure.

In order to correct for inefficiencies in the lepton trigger, reconstruction, and selection, the electroweak processes $W \rightarrow \ell\nu$ have been simulated using the PYTHIA 6.424 generator [24] with a mixture of pp and pn interactions corresponding to pPb collisions. The detector response to each PYTHIA signal event is simulated with GEANT4 [25] and then embedded in a minimum bias pPb background event. These background events are produced with the HIJING event generator [26] and passed through GEANT4 as well.

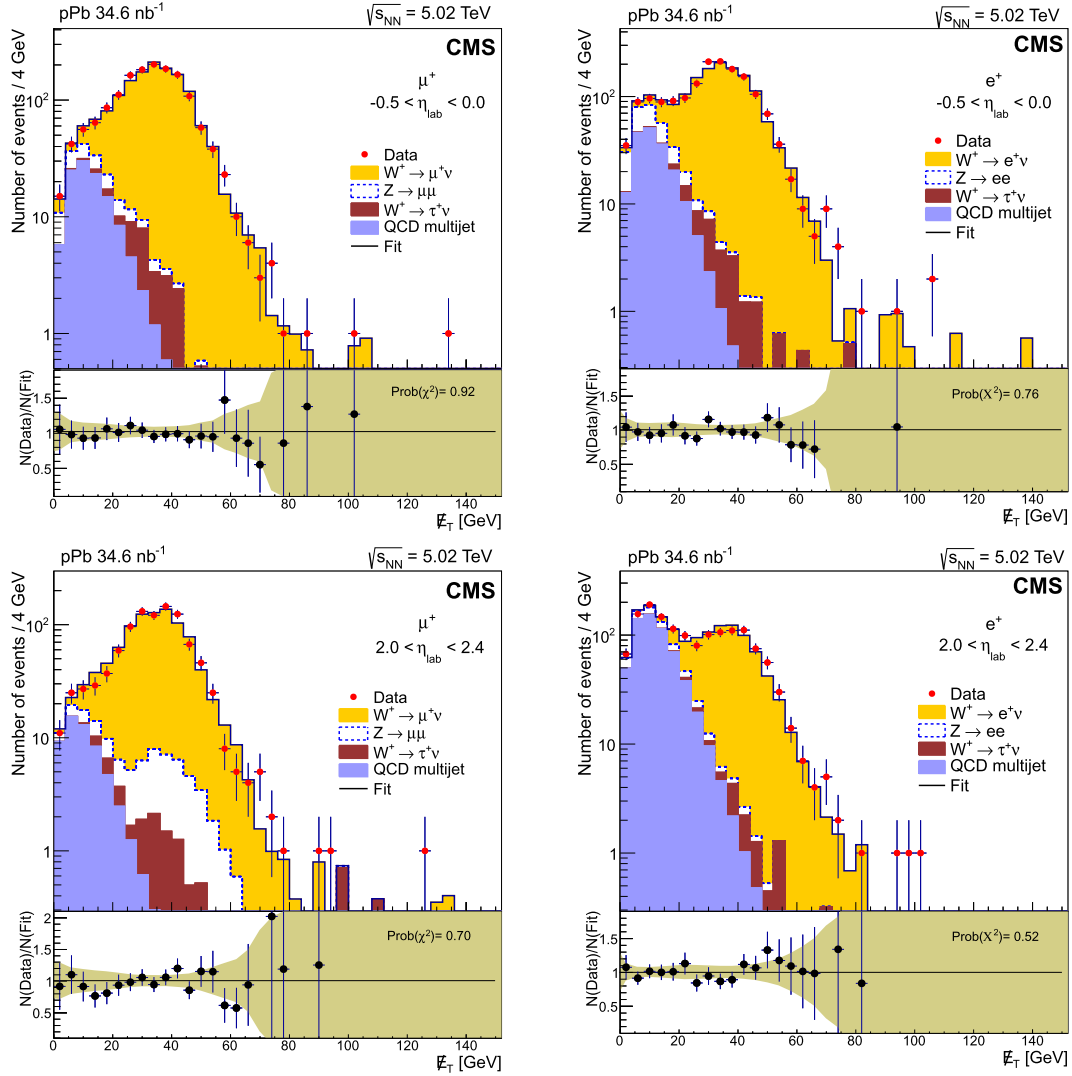


Fig. 1. Missing transverse energy distribution for $W^+ \rightarrow \mu^+ \nu$ (left) and $W^+ \rightarrow e^+ \nu$ (right) events within the $-0.5 < \eta_{\text{lab}} < 0.0$ (top) and $2.0 < \eta_{\text{lab}} < 2.4$ (bottom) ranges. Binned fits to the data (red points) are performed with four contributions, stacked from bottom to top: multijet (QCD, blue), $W^+ \rightarrow \tau^+ \nu$ (brown), $Z \rightarrow \ell \ell$ (white) and $W^+ \rightarrow \ell^+ \nu$ (yellow). The η_{lab} regions are defined such that the proton is moving towards positive η_{lab} values. Error bars represent statistical uncertainties. The lower panels display the data divided by the result of the fit, with the band representing the statistical uncertainties on the sum of the fit components, for each \cancel{E}_T bin. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

Each simulation is done twice, once for each proton beam direction, and includes a boost to reproduce the 0.465 rapidity shift. The embedding is done at the level of detector hits, and the signal and background events share the same generated vertex location. The embedded event is then processed through the trigger emulation and the full event reconstruction chain. The resulting reconstructed events are then reweighted to match the distributions observed in data of the event vertex and activity (as measured in the HF calorimeters). The obtained efficiencies vary with η_{lab} (with higher efficiencies at mid-rapidity), from 59% to 89% for muons, and from 51% to 84% for electrons.

The various components of the single-lepton efficiency are also directly computed from pPb data, using $Z \rightarrow \ell \ell$ samples, and techniques described in Ref. [23]. These efficiencies are then compared to the corresponding efficiencies computed from simulations. In the case of trigger and reconstruction efficiencies, they are found to be consistent. The isolation criterion rejects more leptons in data, because the local activity of the underlying event is greater than in the simulation. To account for such discrepancies, the efficiency from $W \rightarrow \ell \nu$ simulation is multiplied by correction factors,

which are determined as the ratio of the single-lepton efficiencies measured in $Z \rightarrow \ell \ell$ data to those estimated in simulations. The so-called “tag-and-probe” method used for this estimation is described in Ref. [27]. These correction factors are computed in bins of η_{lab} and for positively and negatively charged muons separately. In the electron case, the low statistical precision motivates a correction factor estimated for electrons and positrons combined.

The total systematic uncertainty in the lepton yields is estimated by adding the different contributions in quadrature. The η_{lab} -dependent sources of systematic uncertainty arise from the method used for the estimation of multijet background (0.1–2.0% for muons, 0.5–3.8% for electrons), the normalization of the electroweak background (1–3% for muons and electrons), the efficiency correction factors (2.2–7.5% for muons, 2.6–7.4% for electrons), and the energy scale of electrons (0.1–2.0%). The uncertainty in the momentum scale of muons is found to be negligible. The integrated luminosity measurement uncertainty (3.5% [14]) affects only the W boson production cross sections and cancels in the asymmetry measurements, as does the additional global uncertainty arising from the efficiency of the filter rejecting pileup events

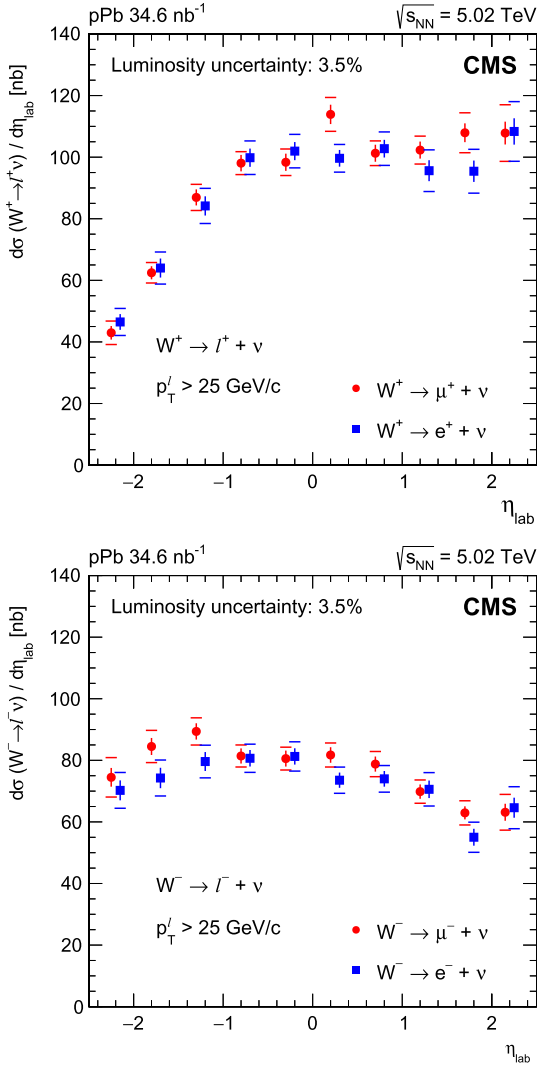


Fig. 2. Production cross sections for $W^+ \rightarrow \ell^+ \nu$ (top) and $W^- \rightarrow \ell^- \nu$ (bottom), as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity. Error bars represent the statistical uncertainties, while brackets show statistical and systematic uncertainties summed in quadrature. The global luminosity uncertainty of $\pm 3.5\%$ is not included. To improve visibility, the muon (electron) measurements, in red circles (blue squares), have been shifted by -0.05 ($+0.05$) in pseudorapidity. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

(0.5% for both channels). Though the common electron/positron correction factors cancel, a residual systematic uncertainty of 3% is assigned to the charge asymmetry, based on simulation studies and η_{lab} -integrated efficiencies determined from $Z \rightarrow e^+e^-$ data. No other systematic uncertainty cancellations are assumed for the asymmetry results.

3. Results

Fig. 2 shows the production cross sections for $p\text{Pb} \rightarrow W^\pm + X \rightarrow \ell^\pm \nu + X$ as a function of the charged lepton pseudorapidity in the laboratory frame, with the lepton having $p'_T > 25$ GeV/c. The cross sections are determined by dividing the efficiency-corrected lepton yields by the integrated luminosity.

Since the cross sections measured in the electron and muon channels are found to be in good agreement with each other, they are combined using the BLUE method [28]. Fig. 3 compares the combined cross sections with next-to-leading-order (NLO) perturbative QCD predictions provided by the authors of Ref. [4] using CT10 [29] proton parton distribution functions (PDF) without or with EPS09 [30] nPDF corrections, termed CT10 and CT10+EPS09, respectively. Their uncertainties are estimated as prescribed in Refs. [29,30]. Table 1 gives the measured cross sections for each channel separately and combined, as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity, for positive and negative leptons. The theoretical predictions and their uncertainties (coming from the PDF set and from the renormalisation and factorisation scales) are also given. The agreement between the data and both theoretical predictions is within the uncertainties, although a small excess of W^- candidates appears at negative η_{lab} , i.e. in the Pb ion beam direction.

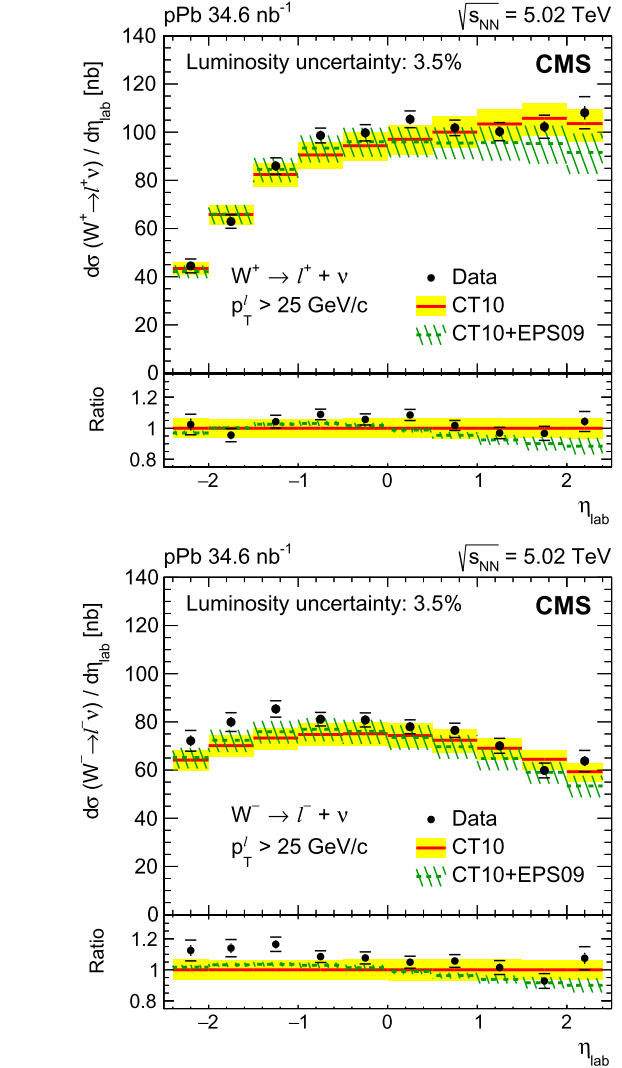


Fig. 3. Production cross sections for $W^+ \rightarrow \ell^+ \nu$ (top) and $W^- \rightarrow \ell^- \nu$ (bottom), as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity. Error bars represent the statistical uncertainties, while brackets show statistical and systematic uncertainties summed in quadrature. The global luminosity uncertainty of $\pm 3.5\%$ is not displayed. Theoretical predictions with (CT10+EPS09, dashed green line) and without (CT10, solid red line) PDF nuclear modifications are also shown, with the uncertainty bands. The bottom panels show the ratio of the data (black points) and CT10+EPS09 (dashed green line) to the CT10 baseline. All theory uncertainty bands include scale and PDF uncertainties, except the EPS09 of the bottom panels which only includes the EPS09 PDF uncertainties. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

Table 1 gives the measured cross sections for each channel separately and combined, as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity, for positive and negative leptons. The theoretical predictions and their uncertainties (coming from the PDF set and from the renormalisation and factorisation scales) are also given. The agreement between the data and both theoretical predictions is within the uncertainties, although a small excess of W^- candidates appears at negative η_{lab} , i.e. in the Pb ion beam direction.

The comparison between the CT10 and CT10+EPS09 calculations shows that the predicted modifications of the PDFs are of the same order as the theoretical uncertainties. This indicates that cross sections alone lack discriminating power, and motivates the

Table 1

Production cross section for $p\text{Pb} \rightarrow W + X \rightarrow \ell\nu + X$ for positively (top) and negatively (bottom) charged leptons of p_T larger than 25 GeV/c, in nanobarns, as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity. Values are given first for muons and electrons separately, then combined. Quoted uncertainties are first statistical, then systematic. Theoretical predictions with (CT10+EPS09) and without (CT10) PDF nuclear modifications are also given, with their uncertainties. The global normalization uncertainty of 3.5% is not included in the listed uncertainties.

$\frac{d\sigma}{d\eta}$ (nb) [η bin]	[-2.4, -2.0]	[-2.0, -1.5]	[-1.5, -1.0]	[-1.0, -0.5]	[-0.5, 0]
μ^+	$43.0 \pm 2.2 \pm 3.1$	$62.5 \pm 2.1 \pm 2.6$	$86.9 \pm 2.6 \pm 3.4$	$98.1 \pm 2.7 \pm 2.6$	$98.3 \pm 2.8 \pm 3.3$
e^+	$46.5 \pm 2.6 \pm 3.6$	$64.0 \pm 3.1 \pm 4.2$	$84.2 \pm 3.1 \pm 4.8$	$99.8 \pm 3.0 \pm 4.6$	$102.0 \pm 2.9 \pm 4.6$
ℓ^+	$44.5 \pm 1.7 \pm 2.3$	$62.9 \pm 1.8 \pm 2.2$	$85.9 \pm 2.0 \pm 2.7$	$98.6 \pm 2.1 \pm 2.3$	$99.7 \pm 2.1 \pm 2.7$
CT10+EPS09	$42.1^{+2.6}_{-2.8}$	$66.0^{+3.8}_{-4.2}$	$84.6^{+4.8}_{-5.4}$	$93.4^{+5.3}_{-6.0}$	$96.0^{+5.8}_{-6.3}$
CT10	$43.4^{+2.5}_{-2.8}$	$65.8^{+3.7}_{-4.2}$	$82.4^{+4.6}_{-5.2}$	$90.5^{+5.1}_{-5.7}$	$94.4^{+5.7}_{-6.1}$
$\frac{d\sigma}{d\eta}$ (nb) [η bin]	[0, 0.5]	[0.5, 1.0]	[1.0, 1.5]	[1.5, 2.0]	[2.0, 2.4]
μ^+	$113.9 \pm 3.1 \pm 4.5$	$101.3 \pm 2.8 \pm 2.9$	$102.3 \pm 2.8 \pm 3.6$	$107.9 \pm 3.1 \pm 5.7$	$107.8 \pm 3.7 \pm 8.4$
e^+	$99.6 \pm 2.7 \pm 3.6$	$102.8 \pm 2.9 \pm 4.6$	$95.6 \pm 3.4 \pm 5.8$	$95.4 \pm 3.5 \pm 6.2$	$108.3 \pm 4.3 \pm 8.7$
ℓ^+	$105.3 \pm 2.1 \pm 2.8$	$101.8 \pm 2.1 \pm 2.5$	$100.2 \pm 2.2 \pm 3.1$	$102.3 \pm 2.3 \pm 4.2$	$108.1 \pm 2.8 \pm 6.0$
CT10+EPS09	$95.9^{+6.2}_{-6.4}$	$95.5^{+6.6}_{-6.7}$	$95.7^{+6.8}_{-7.5}$	$95.3^{+7.5}_{-8.4}$	$91.6^{+7.9}_{-8.9}$
CT10	$97.0^{+5.8}_{-6.4}$	$100.0^{+6.4}_{-6.6}$	$103.4^{+6.3}_{-6.8}$	$105.7^{+6.2}_{-7.2}$	$103.6^{+6.0}_{-7.3}$
$\frac{d\sigma}{d\eta}$ (nb) [η bin]	[-2.4, -2.0]	[-2.0, -1.5]	[-1.5, -1.0]	[-1.0, -0.5]	[-0.5, 0]
μ^-	$74.5 \pm 3.0 \pm 5.6$	$84.5 \pm 2.8 \pm 4.4$	$89.4 \pm 2.6 \pm 3.5$	$81.4 \pm 2.5 \pm 2.6$	$80.6 \pm 2.6 \pm 2.6$
e^-	$70.2 \pm 3.2 \pm 4.8$	$74.3 \pm 3.3 \pm 4.8$	$79.6 \pm 3.1 \pm 4.3$	$80.7 \pm 2.7 \pm 3.7$	$81.3 \pm 2.6 \pm 4.0$
ℓ^-	$72.1 \pm 2.2 \pm 3.7$	$79.9 \pm 2.1 \pm 3.3$	$85.4 \pm 2.0 \pm 2.7$	$81.1 \pm 1.8 \pm 2.1$	$80.8 \pm 1.9 \pm 2.2$
CT10+EPS09	$65.2^{+4.0}_{-4.6}$	$72.4^{+4.4}_{-5.0}$	$75.9^{+4.6}_{-4.9}$	$76.9^{+4.6}_{-5.0}$	$76.1^{+4.9}_{-5.3}$
CT10	$64.2^{+3.9}_{-4.4}$	$70.1^{+4.2}_{-4.7}$	$73.3^{+4.3}_{-4.8}$	$74.8^{+4.4}_{-4.8}$	$75.1^{+4.7}_{-5.1}$
$\frac{d\sigma}{d\eta}$ (nb) [η bin]	[0, 0.5]	[0.5, 1.0]	[1.0, 1.5]	[1.5, 2.0]	[2.0, 2.4]
μ^-	$81.7 \pm 2.5 \pm 3.0$	$78.8 \pm 2.5 \pm 3.3$	$69.8 \pm 2.3 \pm 3.0$	$62.9 \pm 2.1 \pm 3.3$	$63.1 \pm 2.8 \pm 5.1$
e^-	$73.5 \pm 2.5 \pm 3.5$	$74.0 \pm 2.5 \pm 3.5$	$70.6 \pm 2.8 \pm 4.6$	$55.0 \pm 2.7 \pm 4.1$	$64.6 \pm 3.3 \pm 6.0$
ℓ^-	$78.0 \pm 1.8 \pm 2.3$	$76.5 \pm 1.8 \pm 2.4$	$70.1 \pm 1.8 \pm 2.5$	$59.8 \pm 1.7 \pm 2.6$	$63.7 \pm 2.1 \pm 3.9$
CT10+EPS09	$73.6^{+5.1}_{-5.2}$	$69.7^{+4.9}_{-5.1}$	$64.8^{+4.5}_{-4.9}$	$59.1^{+4.3}_{-4.8}$	$53.4^{+4.3}_{-4.8}$
CT10	$74.3^{+4.9}_{-5.2}$	$72.4^{+4.8}_{-5.1}$	$69.1^{+4.2}_{-4.9}$	$64.5^{+3.8}_{-4.3}$	$59.3^{+3.6}_{-4.0}$

study of various asymmetries of the ℓ^+ and ℓ^- cross sections. The interest in such asymmetries is twofold. First, some of the experimental (e.g. integrated luminosity) and theoretical (e.g. scale dependence) uncertainties cancel in such asymmetries. Second, the various asymmetries exhibit different sensitivities to the nuclear modifications of the PDFs, as discussed below.

The lepton charge asymmetry, defined as $(N_\ell^+ - N_\ell^-)/(N_\ell^+ + N_\ell^-)$ with N_ℓ^\pm being the efficiency-corrected lepton yields, is shown in Fig. 4, as a function of η_{lab} , and compared to the theoretical predictions. For $\eta_{\text{lab}} > -1$, both calculations reproduce the present measurements. For $\eta_{\text{lab}} < -1$, however, the two calculations overpredict the asymmetry values. A possible physical origin of this disagreement could be a different modification of u and d quark distributions in nuclei. In proton-(anti)proton collisions, the W-boson charge asymmetry is known to be a sensitive probe of the down-to-up quark PDF ratio in a proton, d^p/u^p [20,31,32]. Similarly, this asymmetry in pPb collisions measured in the lead fragmentation region (i.e. $\eta_{\text{lab}} < 0.465$) probes these quark densities in a nucleon inside the lead nucleus. Assuming the standard isospin symmetry ($u^p = d^n$, $u^n = d^p$), one can define a similar ratio, $d^{p/A}/u^{p/A} = d^p/u^p \times R_d/R_u$, where R_i are the nPDF ratios, $R_u \equiv u^{p/A}/u^p$ and $R_d \equiv d^{p/A}/d^p$. The typical quark momentum fraction probed in the Pb nucleus is given by $x \simeq M_W/\sqrt{s_{\text{NN}}} \times \exp(-\eta_{\text{lab}} + 0.465)$ (assuming that the W boson rapidity is similar to that of the lepton), therefore $x \simeq 0.02\text{--}0.20$ in the range $-2 < \eta_{\text{lab}} < 0$. In most global fit analyses of the nPDFs (as in the case of EPS09), it is assumed that the nuclear ratios respect the isospin symmetry, namely $R_u = R_d$, essentially to minimise the number of free parameters in the fits. However, no physical reason prevents nuclear modifications to be different for up and down quark PDFs. For example, it is known that the

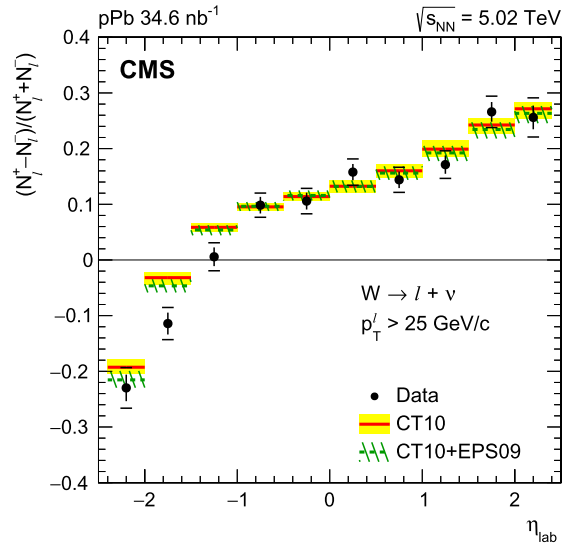


Fig. 4. Lepton charge asymmetry, $(N_\ell^+ - N_\ell^-)/(N_\ell^+ + N_\ell^-)$, as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity. Error bars represent the statistical uncertainties, while brackets show statistical and systematic uncertainties summed in quadrature. Theoretical predictions with (CT10+EPS09, dashed green line) and without (CT10, solid red line) PDF nuclear modifications are also shown, with their uncertainty bands. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

shapes of the up and down quark distributions in protons are different [33]. Furthermore, the present disparity between data and theory is unlikely to come from the proton PDF assumption, given the excellent agreement of lepton charge asymmetry measured in

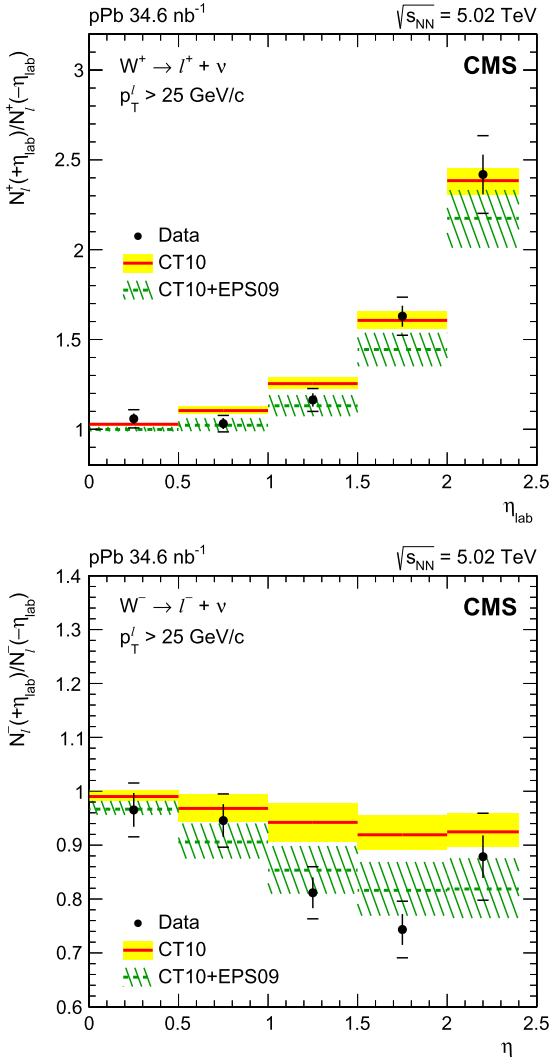


Fig. 5. Forward-backward asymmetries, $N_{\ell}(+\eta_{\text{lab}})/N_{\ell}(-\eta_{\text{lab}})$, for the positive (top) and negative (bottom) leptons. Error bars represent the statistical uncertainties, while brackets show statistical and systematic uncertainties summed in quadrature. Theoretical predictions with (CT10+EPS09, dashed green line) and without (CT10, solid red line) PDF nuclear modifications are also shown, with their uncertainty bands. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

pp collisions by CMS [32] and ATLAS [34] with NLO calculations using CT10 parton densities.

A traditional way to probe nuclear parton densities is to compare the forward and backward W yields, that are respectively sensitive to the nPDFs at small and large x . The forward-backward asymmetries $N_{\ell}^{\pm}(+\eta_{\text{lab}})/N_{\ell}^{\pm}(-\eta_{\text{lab}})$ are shown in Fig. 5, separately for the positively and negatively charged leptons, and compared to the same predictions as mentioned above. Given the experimental accuracy and the magnitude of the differences between the two sets of predictions, the measurements have a potential to discriminate between them. However, although the negative lepton decay channel appears to slightly favour the CT10+EPS09 prediction over the CT10 calculation, the positive lepton channel does not, thus no firm conclusion can be drawn.

Another asymmetry variable, $(N_{\ell}^{+}(+\eta_{\text{lab}}) - N_{\ell}^{+}(-\eta_{\text{lab}}))/(N_{\ell}^{-}(+\eta_{\text{lab}}) - N_{\ell}^{-}(-\eta_{\text{lab}}))$, was proposed in Ref. [4] to reach maximum sensitivity to nuclear modifications of PDFs. However, this asymmetry probability distribution shows a very non-Gaussian behaviour, when its denominator approaches zero, and its sign can

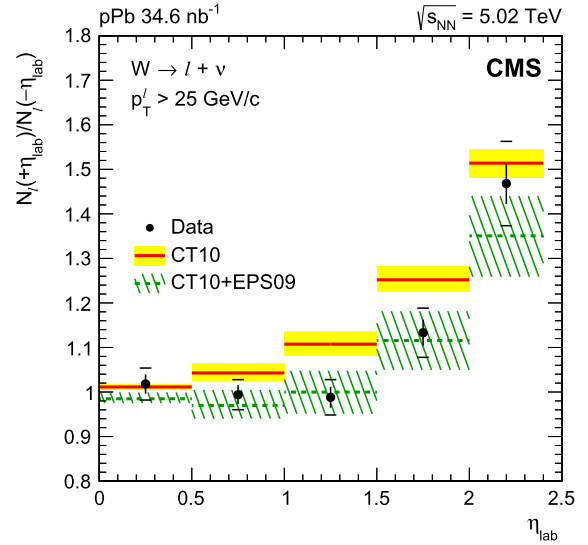


Fig. 6. The forward-backward asymmetry of charge-summed W bosons, as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity. Error bars represent the statistical uncertainties, while brackets show statistical and systematic uncertainties summed in quadrature. Theoretical predictions with (CT10+EPS09, dashed green line) and without (CT10, solid red line) PDF nuclear modifications are also shown, with their uncertainty bands. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

Table 2

Values of the χ^2 test between the measurements and the theoretical predictions, with (CT10+EPS09) or without (CT10) nuclear modifications of the PDFs. The probability (Prob.) to measure a value greater to that measured in data is also given for ten degrees of freedom in the case of the first three observables and five degrees of freedom for the three others observables.

Observable	CT10		CT10+EPS09	
	χ^2	Prob. (%)	χ^2	Prob. (%)
$d\sigma/d\eta(\ell^+)$	13	25	8.6	57
$d\sigma/d\eta(\ell^-)$	15	14	8.2	60
$(N_{\ell}^{+} - N_{\ell}^{-})/(N_{\ell}^{+} + N_{\ell}^{-})$	15	12	11	35
$N_{\ell}^{+}(+\eta_{\text{lab}})/N_{\ell}^{+}(-\eta_{\text{lab}})$	3.1	68	3.2	68
$N_{\ell}^{-}(+\eta_{\text{lab}})/N_{\ell}^{-}(-\eta_{\text{lab}})$	9.7	8.4	3.5	63
$N_{\ell}(+\eta_{\text{lab}})/N_{\ell}(-\eta_{\text{lab}})$	6.2	29	2.1	83

be flipped within the uncertainty. A different asymmetry is proposed here, $N_{\ell}(+\eta_{\text{lab}})/N_{\ell}(-\eta_{\text{lab}})$, a forward-backward asymmetry of the charge-summed W bosons, which achieves a similar sensitivity. As in the case of the charge asymmetry, this asymmetry can be related to the nuclear modifications of the PDFs within the lead nucleus. Here, forward (backward) W boson production is sensitive to the PDFs of the sea quark at $x \sim 10^{-3}$ (valence quark at $x \sim 10^{-1}$) in the lead nucleus. Therefore, the forward-backward ratio probes the small- x modification of the lead nucleus PDF (shading) over the large- x modifications (anti-shading). This asymmetry is shown in Fig. 6, and deviates from unmodified PDFs, more clearly favouring CT10+EPS09 over CT10.

In order to quantify the agreement between the data and the expectation from the CT10 and CT10+EPS09 calculations, a χ^2 test is performed for each of the above (correlated) variables. The few correlations in experimental uncertainties described above, only relevant for W^{\pm} boson cross sections but not for asymmetries, are taken into account, as well as the correlations in theoretical uncertainties. The resulting χ^2 values and probabilities are given in Table 2. The CT10+EPS09 calculations provide a better description of the data, with still a relatively low probability for the lepton charge asymmetry, because of the backward region.

4. Summary

The first measurement of W boson production in pPb collisions has been reported, using the electron and muon decay modes for leptons of p_T above 25 GeV/ c and $|\eta_{\text{lab}}| < 2.4$. The differential cross sections as a function of the lepton pseudorapidity agree with theoretical predictions assuming both unmodified (CT10) and modified (CT10+EPS09) nPDFs, except in the most backward region (Pb ion beam direction), where a hint of an enhancement is seen for the W^- bosons. In the same region, the related lepton charge asymmetry deviates slightly from the predictions, something that could potentially arise from different nuclear modifications of the up and down quark PDFs. In a related observation, forward–backward asymmetries show a deviation from unmodified PDFs. Taken together, these measurements show the need for including W boson data in nuclear parton distribution global fits.

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CMS Collaboration

V. Khachatryan, A.M. Sirunyan, A. Tumasyan

Yerevan Physics Institute, Yerevan, Armenia

W. Adam, T. Bergauer, M. Dragicevic, J. Erö, M. Friedl, R. Frühwirth¹, V.M. Ghete, C. Hartl, N. Hörmann, J. Hrubec, M. Jeitler¹, W. Kiesenhofer, V. Knünz, M. Krammer¹, I. Krätschmer, D. Liko, I. Mikulec, D. Rabady², B. Rahbaran, H. Rohringer, R. Schöfbeck, J. Strauss, W. Treberer-Treberspurg, W. Waltenberger, C.-E. Wulz¹

Institut für Hochenergiephysik der OeAW, Wien, Austria

V. Mossolov, N. Shumeiko, J. Suarez Gonzalez

National Centre for Particle and High Energy Physics, Minsk, Belarus

S. Alderweireldt, S. Bansal, T. Cornelis, E.A. De Wolf, X. Janssen, A. Knutsson, J. Lauwers, S. Luyckx, S. Ochesanu, R. Rougny, M. Van De Klundert, H. Van Haevermaet, P. Van Mechelen, N. Van Remortel, A. Van Spilbeek

Universiteit Antwerpen, Antwerpen, Belgium

F. Blekman, S. Blyweert, J. D'Hondt, N. Daci, N. Heracleous, J. Keaveney, S. Lowette, M. Maes, A. Olbrechts, Q. Python, D. Strom, S. Tavernier, W. Van Doninck, P. Van Mulders, G.P. Van Onsem, I. Villella

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussel, Belgium

C. Caillol, B. Clerbaux, G. De Lentdecker, D. Dobur, L. Favart, A.P.R. Gay, A. Grebenyuk, A. Léonard, A. Mohammadi, L. Perniè², A. Randleconde, T. Reis, T. Seva, L. Thomas, C. Vander Velde, P. Vanlaer, J. Wang, F. Zenoni

Université Libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, Belgium

V. Adler, K. Beernaert, L. Benucci, A. Cimmino, S. Costantini, S. Crucy, S. Dildick, A. Fagot, G. Garcia, J. McCartin, A.A. Ocampo Rios, D. Poyraz, D. Ryckbosch, S. Salva Diblen, M. Sigamani, N. Strobbe, F. Thyssen, M. Tytgat, E. Yazgan, N. Zaganidis

Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium

S. Basegmez, C. Beluffi³, G. Bruno, R. Castello, A. Caudron, L. Ceard, G.G. Da Silveira, C. Delaere, T. du Pree, D. Favart, L. Forthomme, A. Giammanco⁴, J. Hollar, A. Jafari, P. Jez, M. Komm, V. Lemaitre, C. Nuttens, L. Perrini, A. Pin, K. Piotrkowski, A. Popov⁵, L. Quertenmont, M. Selvaggi, M. Vidal Marono, J.M. Vizan Garcia

Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

N. Belyi, T. Caebegs, E. Daubie, G.H. Hammad

Université de Mons, Mons, Belgium

W.L. Aldá Júnior, G.A. Alves, L. Brito, M. Correa Martins Junior, T. Dos Reis Martins, J. Molina, C. Mora Herrera, M.E. Pol, P. Rebello Teles

Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Físicas, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

W. Carvalho, J. Chinellato⁶, A. Custódio, E.M. Da Costa, D. De Jesus Damiao, C. De Oliveira Martins, S. Fonseca De Souza, H. Malbouisson, D. Matos Figueiredo, L. Mundim, H. Nogima, W.L. Prado Da Silva, J. Santaolalla, A. Santoro, A. Sznajder, E.J. Tonelli Manganote⁶, A. Vilela Pereira

Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

C.A. Bernardes^b, S. Dogra^a, T.R. Fernandez Perez Tomei^a, E.M. Gregores^b, P.G. Mercadante^b, S.F. Novaes^a, Sandra S. Padula^a

^a *Universidade Estadual Paulista, São Paulo, Brazil*

^b *Universidade Federal do ABC, São Paulo, Brazil*

A. Aleksandrov, V. Genchev², R. Hadjiiska, P. Iaydjiev, A. Marinov, S. Piperov, M. Rodozov, S. Stoykova, G. Sultanov, M. Vutova

Institute for Nuclear Research and Nuclear Energy, Sofia, Bulgaria

A. Dimitrov, I. Glushkov, L. Litov, B. Pavlov, P. Petkov

University of Sofia, Sofia, Bulgaria

J.G. Bian, G.M. Chen, H.S. Chen, M. Chen, T. Cheng, R. Du, C.H. Jiang, R. Plestina⁷, F. Romeo, J. Tao, Z. Wang

Institute of High Energy Physics, Beijing, China

C. Asawatangtrakuldee, Y. Ban, S. Liu, Y. Mao, S.J. Qian, D. Wang, Z. Xu, L. Zhang, W. Zou

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

C. Avila, A. Cabrera, L.F. Chaparro Sierra, C. Florez, J.P. Gomez, B. Gomez Moreno, J.C. Sanabria

Universidad de Los Andes, Bogota, Colombia

N. Godinovic, D. Lelas, D. Polic, I. Puljak

University of Split, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, Split, Croatia

Z. Antunovic, M. Kovac

University of Split, Faculty of Science, Split, Croatia

V. Brigljevic, K. Kadija, J. Luetic, D. Mekterovic, L. Sudic

Institute Rudjer Boskovic, Zagreb, Croatia

A. Attikis, G. Mavromanolakis, J. Mousa, C. Nicolaou, F. Ptochos, P.A. Razis

University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

M. Bodlak, M. Finger, M. Finger Jr.⁸

Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

Y. Assran⁹, A. Ellithi Kamel¹⁰, M.A. Mahmoud¹¹, A. Radi^{12,13}

Academy of Scientific Research and Technology of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Egyptian Network of High Energy Physics, Cairo, Egypt

M. Kadastik, M. Murumaa, M. Raidal, A. Tiko

National Institute of Chemical Physics and Biophysics, Tallinn, Estonia

P. Eerola, M. Voutilainen

Department of Physics, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

J. Härkönen, V. Karimäki, R. Kinnunen, M.J. Kortelainen, T. Lampén, K. Lassila-Perini, S. Lehti, T. Lindén, P. Luukka, T. Mäenpää, T. Peltola, E. Tuominen, J. Tuominiemi, E. Tuovinen, L. Wendland

Helsinki Institute of Physics, Helsinki, Finland

J. Talvitie, T. Tuuva

Lappeenranta University of Technology, Lappeenranta, Finland

M. Besancon, F. Couderc, M. Dejardin, D. Denegri, B. Fabbro, J.L. Faure, C. Favaro, F. Ferri, S. Ganjour, A. Givernaud, P. Gras, G. Hamel de Monchenault, P. Jarry, E. Locci, J. Malcles, J. Rander, A. Rosowsky, M. Titov

DSM/IRFU, CEA/Saclay, Gif-sur-Yvette, France

F. Arleo, S. Baffioni, F. Beaudette, P. Busson, E. Chapon, C. Charlot, T. Dahms, M. Dalchenko, L. Dobrzynski, N. Filipovic, A. Florent, R. Granier de Cassagnac, L. Mastrolorenzo, P. Miné, I.N. Naranjo, M. Nguyen, C. Ochando, G. Ortona, P. Paganini, S. Regnard, R. Salerno, J.B. Sauvan, Y. Sirois, C. Veelken, Y. Yilmaz, A. Zabi

Laboratoire Leprince-Ringuet, Ecole Polytechnique, IN2P3–CNRS, Palaiseau, France

J.-L. Agram¹⁴, J. Andrea, A. Aubin, D. Bloch, J.-M. Brom, E.C. Chabert, C. Collard, E. Conte¹⁴, J.-C. Fontaine¹⁴, D. Gelé, U. Goerlach, C. Goetzmann, A.-C. Le Bihan, K. Skovpen, P. Van Hove

Institut Pluridisciplinaire Hubert Curien, Université de Strasbourg, Université de Haute Alsace Mulhouse, CNRS/IN2P3, Strasbourg, France

S. Gadrat

Centre de Calcul de l'Institut National de Physique Nucleaire et de Physique des Particules, CNRS/IN2P3, Villeurbanne, France

S. Beauceron, N. Beaupere, C. Bernet⁷, G. Boudoul², E. Bouvier, S. Brochet, C.A. Carrillo Montoya, J. Chasserat, R. Chierici, D. Contardo², P. Depasse, H. El Mamouni, J. Fan, J. Fay, S. Gascon, M. Gouzevitch, B. Ille, T. Kurca, M. Lethuillier, L. Mirabito, S. Perries, J.D. Ruiz Alvarez, D. Sabes, L. Sgandurra, V. Sordini, M. Vander Donckt, P. Verdier, S. Viret, H. Xiao

Université de Lyon, Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1, CNRS-IN2P3, Institut de Physique Nucléaire de Lyon, Villeurbanne, France

Z. Tsamalaidze⁸

Institute of High Energy Physics and Informatization, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia

C. Autermann, S. Beranek, M. Bontenackels, M. Edelhoff, L. Feld, A. Heister, K. Klein, M. Lipinski, A. Ostapchuk, M. Preuten, F. Raupach, J. Sammet, S. Schael, J.F. Schulte, H. Weber, B. Wittmer, V. Zhukov⁵

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

M. Ata, M. Brodski, E. Dietz-Laursonn, D. Duchardt, M. Erdmann, R. Fischer, A. Güth, T. Hebbeker, C. Heidemann, K. Hoepfner, D. Klingebiel, S. Knutzen, P. Kreuzer, M. Merschmeyer, A. Meyer, P. Millet, M. Olschewski, K. Padeken, P. Papacz, H. Reithler, S.A. Schmitz, L. Sonnenschein, D. Teyssier, S. Thüer, M. Weber

RWTH Aachen University, III. Physikalisches Institut A, Aachen, Germany

V. Cherepanov, Y. Erdogan, G. Flügge, H. Geenen, M. Geisler, W. Haj Ahmad, F. Hoehle, B. Kargoll, T. Kress, Y. Kuessel, A. Künsken, J. Lingemann², A. Nowack, I.M. Nugent, O. Pooth, A. Stahl

RWTH Aachen University, III. Physikalisches Institut B, Aachen, Germany

M. Aldaya Martin, I. Asin, N. Bartosik, J. Behr, U. Behrens, A.J. Bell, A. Bethani, K. Borras, A. Burgmeier, A. Cakir, L. Calligaris, A. Campbell, S. Choudhury, F. Costanza, C. Diez Pardos, G. Dolinska, S. Dooling, T. Dorland, G. Eckerlin, D. Eckstein, T. Eichhorn, G. Flucke, J. Garay Garcia, A. Geiser, A. Gizhko, P. Gunnellini, J. Hauk, M. Hempel¹⁵, H. Jung, A. Kalogeropoulos, M. Kasemann, P. Katsas, J. Kieseler, C. Kleinwort, I. Korol, D. Krücker, W. Lange, J. Leonard, K. Lipka, A. Lobanov, W. Lohmann¹⁵, B. Lutz, R. Mankel, I. Marfin¹⁵, I.-A. Melzer-Pellmann, A.B. Meyer, G. Mittag, J. Mnich, A. Mussgiller, S. Naumann-Emme, A. Nayak, E. Ntomari, H. Perrey, D. Pitzl, R. Placakyte, A. Raspereza, P.M. Ribeiro Cipriano, B. Roland, E. Ron, M.Ö. Sahin, J. Salfeld-Nebgen, P. Saxena, T. Schoerner-Sadenius, M. Schröder, C. Seitz, S. Spannagel, A.D.R. Vargas Trevino, R. Walsh, C. Wissing

Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron, Hamburg, Germany

V. Blobel, M. Centis Vignali, A.R. Draeger, J. Erfle, E. Garutti, K. Goebel, M. Görner, J. Haller, M. Hoffmann, R.S. Höing, A. Junkes, H. Kirschenmann, R. Klanner, R. Kogler, J. Lange, T. Lapsien, T. Lenz, I. Marchesini, J. Ott, T. Peiffer, A. Perieanu, N. Pietsch, J. Poehlsen, T. Poehlsen, D. Rathjens, C. Sander, H. Schettler, P. Schleper, E. Schlieckau, A. Schmidt, M. Seidel, V. Sola, H. Stadie, G. Steinbrück, D. Troendle, E. Usai, L. Vanelderden, A. Vanhoefer

University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany

C. Barth, C. Baus, J. Berger, C. Böser, E. Butz, T. Chwalek, W. De Boer, A. Descroix, A. Dierlamm, M. Feindt, F. Frensch, M. Giffels, A. Gilbert, F. Hartmann², T. Hauth, U. Husemann, I. Katkov⁵, A. Kornmayer², P. Lobelle Pardo, M.U. Mozer, T. Müller, Th. Müller, A. Nürnberg, G. Quast, K. Rabbertz, S. Röcker, H.J. Simonis, F.M. Stober, R. Ulrich, J. Wagner-Kuhr, S. Wayand, T. Weiler, R. Wolf

Institut für Experimentelle Kernphysik, Karlsruhe, Germany

G. Anagnostou, G. Daskalakis, T. Gerasis, V.A. Giakoumopoulou, A. Kyriakis, D. Loukas, A. Markou, C. Markou, A. Psallidas, I. Topsis-Giotis

Institute of Nuclear and Particle Physics (INPP), NCSR Demokritos, Aghia Paraskevi, Greece

A. Agapitos, S. Kesisoglou, A. Panagiotou, N. Saoulidou, E. Stiliaris

University of Athens, Athens, Greece

X. Aslanoglou, I. Evangelou, G. Flouris, C. Foudas, P. Kokkas, N. Manthos, I. Papadopoulos, E. Paradas, J. Strologas

University of Ioánnina, Ioánnina, Greece

G. Bencze, C. Hajdu, P. Hidas, D. Horvath¹⁶, F. Sikler, V. Veszpremi, G. Vesztergombi¹⁷, A.J. Zsigmond

Wigner Research Centre for Physics, Budapest, Hungary

N. Beni, S. Czellar, J. Karancsi¹⁸, J. Molnar, J. Palinkas, Z. Szillasi

Institute of Nuclear Research ATOMKI, Debrecen, Hungary

A. Makovec, P. Raics, Z.L. Trocsanyi, B. Ujvari

University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary

S.K. Swain

National Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhubaneswar, India

S.B. Beri, V. Bhatnagar, R. Gupta, U. Bhawandeep, A.K. Kalsi, M. Kaur, R. Kumar, M. Mittal, N. Nishu, J.B. Singh

Panjab University, Chandigarh, India

Ashok Kumar, Arun Kumar, S. Ahuja, A. Bhardwaj, B.C. Choudhary, A. Kumar, S. Malhotra, M. Naimuddin, K. Ranjan, V. Sharma

University of Delhi, Delhi, India

S. Banerjee, S. Bhattacharya, K. Chatterjee, S. Dutta, B. Gomber, Sa. Jain, Sh. Jain, R. Khurana, A. Modak, S. Mukherjee, D. Roy, S. Sarkar, M. Sharan

Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata, India

A. Abdulsalam, D. Dutta, V. Kumar, A.K. Mohanty², L.M. Pant, P. Shukla, A. Topkar

Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai, India

T. Aziz, S. Banerjee, S. Bhowmik¹⁹, R.M. Chatterjee, R.K. Dewanjee, S. Dugad, S. Ganguly, S. Ghosh, M. Guchait, A. Gurtu²⁰, G. Kole, S. Kumar, M. Maity¹⁹, G. Majumder, K. Mazumdar, G.B. Mohanty, B. Parida, K. Sudhakar, N. Wickramage²¹

Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, India

H. Bakhshiansohi, H. Behnamian, S.M. Etesami²², A. Fahim²³, R. Goldouzian, M. Khakzad, M. Mohammadi Najafabadi, M. Naseri, S. Paktinat Mehdiabadi, F. Rezaei Hosseinabadi, B. Safarzadeh²⁴, M. Zeinali

Institute for Research in Fundamental Sciences (IPM), Tehran, Iran

M. Felcini, M. Grunewald

University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

M. Abbrescia^{a,b}, C. Calabria^{a,b}, S.S. Chhibra^{a,b}, A. Colaleo^a, D. Creanza^{a,c}, L. Cristella^{a,b}, N. De Filippis^{a,c}, M. De Palma^{a,b}, L. Fiore^a, G. Iaselli^{a,c}, G. Maggi^{a,c}, M. Maggi^a, S. My^{a,c}, S. Nuzzo^{a,b}, A. Pompili^{a,b}, G. Pugliese^{a,c}, R. Radogna^{a,b,2}, G. Selvaggi^{a,b}, A. Sharma^a, L. Silvestris^{a,2}, R. Venditti^{a,b}, P. Verwilligen^a

^a INFN Sezione di Bari, Bari, Italy

^b Università di Bari, Bari, Italy

^c Politecnico di Bari, Bari, Italy

G. Abbiendi^a, A.C. Benvenuti^a, D. Bonacorsi^{a,b}, S. Braibant-Giacomelli^{a,b}, L. Brigliadori^{a,b}, R. Campanini^{a,b}, P. Capiluppi^{a,b}, A. Castro^{a,b}, F.R. Cavallo^a, G. Codispoti^{a,b}, M. Cuffiani^{a,b}, G.M. Dallavalle^a, F. Fabbri^a, A. Fanfani^{a,b}, D. Fasanella^{a,b}, P. Giacomelli^a, C. Grandi^a, L. Guiducci^{a,b}, S. Marcellini^a, G. Masetti^a, A. Montanari^a, F.L. Navarria^{a,b}, A. Perrotta^a, A.M. Rossi^{a,b}, T. Rovelli^{a,b}, G.P. Siroli^{a,b}, N. Tosi^{a,b}, R. Travaglini^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

^b Università di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

S. Albergo^{a,b}, G. Cappello^a, M. Chiorboli^{a,b}, S. Costa^{a,b}, F. Giordano^{a,2}, R. Potenza^{a,b}, A. Tricomi^{a,b}, C. Tuve^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Catania, Catania, Italy

^b Università di Catania, Catania, Italy

^c CSFNSM, Catania, Italy

G. Barbagli^a, V. Ciulli^{a,b}, C. Civinini^a, R. D'Alessandro^{a,b}, E. Focardi^{a,b}, E. Gallo^a, S. Gonzi^{a,b}, V. Gori^{a,b}, P. Lenzi^{a,b}, M. Meschini^a, S. Paoletti^a, G. Sguazzoni^a, A. Tropiano^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Firenze, Firenze, Italy

^b Università di Firenze, Firenze, Italy

L. Benussi, S. Bianco, F. Fabbri, D. Piccolo

INFN Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, Frascati, Italy

R. Ferretti ^{a,b}, F. Ferro ^a, M. Lo Vetere ^{a,b}, E. Robutti ^a, S. Tosi ^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Genova, Genova, Italy

^b Università di Genova, Genova, Italy

M.E. Dinardo ^{a,b}, S. Fiorendi ^{a,b}, S. Gennai ^{a,2}, R. Gerosa ^{a,b,2}, A. Ghezzi ^{a,b}, P. Govoni ^{a,b}, M.T. Lucchini ^{a,b,2}, S. Malvezzi ^a, R.A. Manzoni ^{a,b}, A. Martelli ^{a,b}, B. Marzocchi ^{a,b,2}, D. Menasce ^a, L. Moroni ^a, M. Paganoni ^{a,b}, D. Pedrini ^a, S. Ragazzi ^{a,b}, N. Redaelli ^a, T. Tabarelli de Fatis ^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Milano-Bicocca, Milano, Italy

^b Università di Milano-Bicocca, Milano, Italy

S. Buontempo ^a, N. Cavallo ^{a,c}, S. Di Guida ^{a,d,2}, F. Fabozzi ^{a,c}, A.O.M. Iorio ^{a,b}, L. Lista ^a, S. Meola ^{a,d,2}, M. Merola ^a, P. Paolucci ^{a,2}

^a INFN Sezione di Napoli, Napoli, Italy

^b Università di Napoli 'Federico II', Napoli, Italy

^c Università della Basilicata, Potenza, Italy

^d Università G. Marconi, Roma, Italy

P. Azzi ^a, N. Bacchetta ^a, D. Bisello ^{a,b}, A. Branca ^{a,b}, R. Carlin ^{a,b}, P. Checchia ^a, M. Dall'Osso ^{a,b}, T. Dorigo ^a, U. Gasparini ^{a,b}, A. Gozzelino ^a, K. Kanishchev ^{a,c}, S. Lacaprara ^a, M. Margoni ^{a,b}, A.T. Meneguzzo ^{a,b}, J. Pazzini ^{a,b}, N. Pozzobon ^{a,b}, P. Ronchese ^{a,b}, F. Simonetto ^{a,b}, E. Torassa ^a, M. Tosi ^{a,b}, S. Vanini ^{a,b}, S. Ventura ^a, P. Zotto ^{a,b}, A. Zucchetta ^{a,b}, G. Zumerle ^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Padova, Padova, Italy

^b Università di Padova, Padova, Italy

^c Università di Trento, Trento, Italy

M. Gabusi ^{a,b}, S.P. Ratti ^{a,b}, V. Re ^a, C. Riccardi ^{a,b}, P. Salvini ^a, P. Vitulo ^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Pavia, Pavia, Italy

^b Università di Pavia, Pavia, Italy

M. Biasini ^{a,b}, G.M. Bilei ^a, D. Ciangottini ^{a,b,2}, L. Fanò ^{a,b}, P. Lariccia ^{a,b}, G. Mantovani ^{a,b}, M. Menichelli ^a, A. Saha ^a, A. Santocchia ^{a,b}, A. Spiezia ^{a,b,2}

^a INFN Sezione di Perugia, Perugia, Italy

^b Università di Perugia, Perugia, Italy

K. Androsov ^{a,25}, P. Azzurri ^a, G. Bagliesi ^a, J. Bernardini ^a, T. Boccali ^a, G. Broccolo ^{a,c}, R. Castaldi ^a, M.A. Ciocci ^{a,25}, R. Dell'Orso ^a, S. Donato ^{a,c,2}, G. Fedi, F. Fiori ^{a,c}, L. Foà ^{a,c}, A. Giassi ^a, M.T. Grippo ^{a,25}, F. Ligabue ^{a,c}, T. Lomtadze ^a, L. Martini ^{a,b}, A. Messineo ^{a,b}, C.S. Moon ^{a,26}, F. Palla ^{a,2}, A. Rizzi ^{a,b}, A. Savoy-Navarro ^{a,27}, A.T. Serban ^a, P. Spagnolo ^a, P. Squillacioti ^{a,25}, R. Tenchini ^a, G. Tonelli ^{a,b}, A. Venturi ^a, P.G. Verdini ^a, C. Vernieri ^{a,c}

^a INFN Sezione di Pisa, Pisa, Italy

^b Università di Pisa, Pisa, Italy

^c Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Pisa, Italy

L. Barone ^{a,b}, F. Cavallari ^a, G. D'imperio ^{a,b}, D. Del Re ^{a,b}, M. Diemoz ^a, C. Jorda ^a, E. Longo ^{a,b}, F. Margaroli ^{a,b}, P. Meridiani ^a, F. Micheli ^{a,b,2}, G. Organtini ^{a,b}, R. Paramatti ^a, S. Rahatlou ^{a,b}, C. Rovelli ^a, F. Santanastasio ^{a,b}, L. Soffi ^{a,b}, P. Traczyk ^{a,b,2}

^a INFN Sezione di Roma, Roma, Italy

^b Università di Roma, Roma, Italy

N. Amapane ^{a,b}, R. Arcidiacono ^{a,c}, S. Argiro ^{a,b}, M. Arneodo ^{a,c}, R. Bellan ^{a,b}, C. Biino ^a, N. Cartiglia ^a, S. Casasso ^{a,b,2}, M. Costa ^{a,b}, R. Covarelli, A. Degano ^{a,b}, N. Demaria ^a, L. Finco ^{a,b,2}, C. Mariotti ^a, S. Maselli ^a, G. Mazza ^a, E. Migliore ^{a,b}, V. Monaco ^{a,b}, M. Musich ^a, M.M. Obertino ^{a,c}, L. Pacher ^{a,b}, N. Pastrone ^a, M. Pelliccioni ^a, G.L. Pinna Angioni ^{a,b}, A. Romero ^{a,b}, M. Ruspa ^{a,c}, R. Sacchi ^{a,b}, A. Solano ^{a,b}, A. Staiano ^a, U. Tamponi ^a

^a INFN Sezione di Torino, Torino, Italy

^b Università di Torino, Torino, Italy

^c Università del Piemonte Orientale, Novara, Italy

S. Belforte^a, V. Candelise^{a,b,2}, M. Casarsa^a, F. Cossutti^a, G. Della Ricca^{a,b}, B. Gobbo^a, C. La Licata^{a,b},
M. Marone^{a,b}, A. Schizzi^{a,b}, T. Umer^{a,b}, A. Zanetti^a

^a INFN Sezione di Trieste, Trieste, Italy

^b Università di Trieste, Trieste, Italy

S. Chang, A. Kropivnitskaya, S.K. Nam

Kangwon National University, Chunchon, Republic of Korea

D.H. Kim, G.N. Kim, M.S. Kim, D.J. Kong, S. Lee, Y.D. Oh, H. Park, A. Sakharov, D.C. Son

Kyungpook National University, Daegu, Republic of Korea

T.J. Kim, M.S. Ryu

Chonbuk National University, Jeonju, Republic of Korea

J.Y. Kim, D.H. Moon, S. Song

Chonnam National University, Institute for Universe and Elementary Particles, Kwangju, Republic of Korea

S. Choi, D. Gyun, B. Hong, M. Jo, H. Kim, Y. Kim, B. Lee, K.S. Lee, S.K. Park, Y. Roh

Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

H.D. Yoo

Seoul National University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

M. Choi, J.H. Kim, I.C. Park, G. Ryu

University of Seoul, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Y. Choi, Y.K. Choi, J. Goh, D. Kim, E. Kwon, J. Lee, I. Yu

Sungkyunkwan University, Suwon, Republic of Korea

A. Juodagalvis

Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania

J.R. Komaragiri, M.A.B. Md Ali

National Centre for Particle Physics, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

E. Casimiro Linares, H. Castilla-Valdez, E. De La Cruz-Burelo, I. Heredia-de La Cruz,
A. Hernandez-Almada, R. Lopez-Fernandez, A. Sanchez-Hernandez

Centro de Investigacion y de Estudios Avanzados del IPN, Mexico City, Mexico

S. Carrillo Moreno, F. Vazquez Valencia

Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City, Mexico

I. Pedraza, H.A. Salazar Ibarguen

Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla, Puebla, Mexico

A. Morelos Pineda

Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, San Luis Potosí, Mexico

D. Krofcheck

University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

P.H. Butler, S. Reucroft

University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

A. Ahmad, M. Ahmad, Q. Hassan, H.R. Hoorani, W.A. Khan, T. Khurshid, M. Shoaib

National Centre for Physics, Quaid-I-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan

H. Bialkowska, M. Bluj, B. Boimska, T. Frueboes, M. Górski, M. Kazana, K. Nawrocki, K. Romanowska-Rybinska, M. Szleper, P. Zalewski

National Centre for Nuclear Research, Swierk, Poland

G. Brona, K. Bunkowski, M. Cwiok, W. Dominik, K. Doroba, A. Kalinowski, M. Konecki, J. Krolikowski, M. Misiura, M. Olszewski

Institute of Experimental Physics, Faculty of Physics, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

P. Bargassa, C. Beirão Da Cruz E Silva, P. Faccioli, P.G. Ferreira Parracho, M. Gallinaro, L. Lloret Iglesias, F. Nguyen, J. Rodrigues Antunes, J. Seixas, J. Varela, P. Vischia

Laboratório de Instrumentação e Física Experimental de Partículas, Lisboa, Portugal

S. Afanasiev, P. Bunin, M. Gavrilenko, I. Golutvin, I. Gorbunov, A. Kamenev, V. Karjavin, V. Konoplyanikov, A. Lanev, A. Malakhov, V. Matveev²⁸, P. Moisenz, V. Palichik, V. Perelygin, S. Shmatov, N. Skatchkov, V. Smirnov, A. Zarubin

Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, Dubna, Russia

V. Golovtsov, Y. Ivanov, V. Kim²⁹, E. Kuznetsova, P. Levchenko, V. Murzin, V. Oreshkin, I. Smirnov, V. Sulimov, L. Uvarov, S. Vavilov, A. Vorobyev, An. Vorobyev

Petersburg Nuclear Physics Institute, Gatchina (St. Petersburg), Russia

Yu. Andreev, A. Dermenev, S. Gninenko, N. Golubev, M. Kirsanov, N. Krasnikov, A. Pashenkov, D. Tlisov, A. Toropin

Institute for Nuclear Research, Moscow, Russia

V. Epshteyn, V. Gavrilov, N. Lychkovskaya, V. Popov, I. Pozdnyakov, G. Safronov, S. Semenov, A. Spiridonov, V. Stolin, E. Vlasov, A. Zhokin

Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Moscow, Russia

V. Andreev, M. Azarkin³⁰, I. Dremin³⁰, M. Kirakosyan, A. Leonidov³⁰, G. Mesyats, S.V. Rusakov, A. Vinogradov

P.N. Lebedev Physical Institute, Moscow, Russia

A. Belyaev, E. Boos, A. Demiyarov, A. Ershov, A. Gribushin, O. Kodolova, V. Korotkikh, I. Lokhtin, S. Obraztsov, S. Petrushanko, V. Savrin, A. Snigirev, I. Vardanyan

Skobeltsyn Institute of Nuclear Physics, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia

I. Azhgirey, I. Bayshev, S. Bitioukov, V. Kachanov, A. Kalinin, D. Konstantinov, V. Krychkine, V. Petrov, R. Ryutin, A. Sobol, L. Tourtchanovitch, S. Troshin, N. Tyurin, A. Uzunian, A. Volkov

State Research Center of Russian Federation, Institute for High Energy Physics, Protvino, Russia

P. Adzic³¹, M. Ekmedzic, J. Milosevic, V. Rekovic

University of Belgrade, Faculty of Physics and Vinca Institute of Nuclear Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia

J. Alcaraz Maestre, C. Battilana, E. Calvo, M. Cerrada, M. Chamizo Llatas, N. Colino, B. De La Cruz, A. Delgado Peris, D. Domínguez Vázquez, A. Escalante Del Valle, C. Fernandez Bedoya, J.P. Fernández Ramos, J. Flix, M.C. Fouz, P. Garcia-Abia, O. Gonzalez Lopez, S. Goy Lopez, J.M. Hernandez, M.I. Josa, E. Navarro De Martino, A. Pérez-Calero Yzquierdo, J. Puerta Pelayo, A. Quintario Olmeda, I. Redondo, L. Romero, M.S. Soares

Centro de Investigaciones Energéticas Medioambientales y Tecnológicas (CIEMAT), Madrid, Spain

C. Albajar, J.F. de Trocóniz, M. Missiroli, D. Moran

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid, Spain

H. Brun, J. Cuevas, J. Fernandez Menendez, S. Folgueras, I. Gonzalez Caballero

Universidad de Oviedo, Oviedo, Spain

J.A. Brochero Cifuentes, I.J. Cabrillo, A. Calderon, J. Duarte Campderros, M. Fernandez, G. Gomez, A. Graziano, A. Lopez Virto, J. Marco, R. Marco, C. Martinez Rivero, F. Matorras, F.J. Munoz Sanchez, J. Piedra Gomez, T. Rodrigo, A.Y. Rodríguez-Marrero, A. Ruiz-Jimeno, L. Scodellaro, I. Vila, R. Vilar Cortabitarte

Instituto de Física de Cantabria (IFCA), CSIC-Universidad de Cantabria, Santander, Spain

D. Abbaneo, E. Auffray, G. Auzinger, M. Bachtis, P. Baillon, A.H. Ball, D. Barney, A. Benaglia, J. Bendavid, L. Benhabib, J.F. Benitez, P. Bloch, A. Bocci, A. Bonato, O. Bondu, C. Botta, H. Breuker, T. Camporesi, G. Cerminara, S. Colafranceschi³², M. D'Alfonso, D. d'Enterria, A. Dabrowski, A. David, F. De Guio, A. De Roeck, S. De Visscher, E. Di Marco, M. Dobson, M. Dordevic, B. Dorney, N. Dupont-Sagorin, A. Elliott-Peisert, G. Franzoni, W. Funk, D. Gigi, K. Gill, D. Giordano, M. Girone, F. Glege, R. Guida, S. Gundacker, M. Guthoff, J. Hammer, M. Hansen, P. Harris, J. Hegeman, V. Innocente, P. Janot, K. Kousouris, K. Krajczar, P. Lecoq, C. Lourenço, N. Magini, L. Malgeri, M. Mannelli, J. Marrouche, L. Masetti, F. Meijers, S. Mersi, E. Meschi, F. Moortgat, S. Morovic, M. Mulders, L. Orsini, L. Pape, E. Perez, A. Petrilli, G. Petrucciani, A. Pfeiffer, M. Pimiä, D. Piparo, M. Plagge, A. Racz, G. Rolandi³³, M. Rovere, H. Sakulin, C. Schäfer, C. Schwick, A. Sharma, P. Siegrist, P. Silva, M. Simon, P. Sphicas³⁴, D. Spiga, J. Steggemann, B. Stieger, M. Stoye, Y. Takahashi, D. Treille, A. Tsirou, G.I. Veres¹⁷, N. Wardle, H.K. Wöhri, H. Wollny, W.D. Zeuner

CERN, European Organization for Nuclear Research, Geneva, Switzerland

W. Bertl, K. Deiters, W. Erdmann, R. Horisberger, Q. Ingram, H.C. Kaestli, D. Kotlinski, U. Langenegger, D. Renker, T. Rohe

Paul Scherrer Institut, Villigen, Switzerland

F. Bachmair, L. Bäni, L. Bianchini, M.A. Buchmann, B. Casal, N. Chanon, G. Dissertori, M. Dittmar, M. Donegà, M. Dünser, P. Eller, C. Grab, D. Hits, J. Hoss, W. Luster mann, B. Mangano, A.C. Marini, M. Marionneau, P. Martinez Ruiz del Arbol, M. Masciovecchio, D. Meister, N. Mohr, P. Musella, C. Nägeli³⁵, F. Nessi-Tedaldi, F. Pandolfi, F. Pauss, L. Perrozzi, M. Peruzzi, M. Quittnat, L. Rebane, M. Rossini, A. Starodumov³⁶, M. Takahashi, K. Theofilatos, R. Wallny, H.A. Weber

Institute for Particle Physics, ETH Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland

C. Amsler³⁷, M.F. Canelli, V. Chiochia, A. De Cosa, A. Hinzmann, T. Hreus, B. Kilminster, C. Lange, J. Ngadiuba, D. Pinna, P. Robmann, F.J. Ronga, S. Taroni, M. Verzetti, Y. Yang

Universität Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland

M. Cardaci, K.H. Chen, T.H. Doan, C. Ferro, C.M. Kuo, W. Lin, Y.J. Lu, S.Y. Tseng, R. Volpe, S.S. Yu

National Central University, Chung-Li, Taiwan

P. Chang, Y.H. Chang, Y. Chao, K.F. Chen, P.H. Chen, C. Dietz, U. Grundler, W.-S. Hou, Y.F. Liu, R.-S. Lu, E. Petrakou, Y.M. Tzeng, R. Wilken

National Taiwan University (NTU), Taipei, Taiwan

B. Asavapibhop, G. Singh, N. Srimanobhas, N. Suwonjandee

Chulalongkorn University, Faculty of Science, Department of Physics, Bangkok, Thailand

A. Adiguzel, M.N. Bakirci³⁸, S. Cerci³⁹, C. Dozen, I. Dumanoglu, E. Eskut, S. Girgis, G. Gokbulut, Y. Guler, E. Gurpinar, I. Hos, E.E. Kangal, A. Kayis Topaksu, G. Onengut⁴⁰, K. Ozdemir, S. Ozturk³⁸, A. Polatoz, D. Sunar Cerci³⁹, B. Tali³⁹, H. Topakli³⁸, M. Vergili, C. Zorbilmez

Cukurova University, Adana, Turkey

I.V. Akin, B. Bilin, S. Bilmis, H. Gamsizkan⁴¹, B. Isildak⁴², G. Karapinar⁴³, K. Ocalan⁴⁴, S. Sekmen, U.E. Surat, M. Yalvac, M. Zeyrek

Middle East Technical University, Physics Department, Ankara, Turkey

E.A. Albayrak⁴⁵, E. Gülmez, M. Kaya⁴⁶, O. Kaya⁴⁷, T. Yetkin⁴⁸

Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey

K. Cankocak, F.I. Vardarli

Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey

L. Levchuk, P. Sorokin

National Scientific Center, Kharkov Institute of Physics and Technology, Kharkov, Ukraine

J.J. Brooke, E. Clement, D. Cussans, H. Flacher, J. Goldstein, M. Grimes, G.P. Heath, H.F. Heath, J. Jacob, L. Kreczko, C. Lucas, Z. Meng, D.M. Newbold⁴⁹, S. Paramesvaran, A. Poll, T. Sakuma, S. Seif El Nasrstorey, S. Senkin, V.J. Smith

University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom

A. Belyaev⁵⁰, C. Brew, R.M. Brown, D.J.A. Cockerill, J.A. Coughlan, K. Harder, S. Harper, E. Olaiya, D. Petyt, C.H. Shepherd-Themistocleous, A. Thea, I.R. Tomalin, T. Williams, W.J. Womersley, S.D. Worm

Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Didcot, United Kingdom

M. Baber, R. Bainbridge, O. Buchmuller, D. Burton, D. Colling, N. Cripps, P. Dauncey, G. Davies, M. Della Negra, P. Dunne, A. Elwood, W. Ferguson, J. Fulcher, D. Futyan, G. Hall, G. Iles, M. Jarvis, G. Karapostoli, M. Kenzie, R. Lane, R. Lucas⁴⁹, L. Lyons, A.-M. Magnan, S. Malik, B. Mathias, J. Nash, A. Nikitenko³⁶, J. Pela, M. Pesaresi, K. Petridis, D.M. Raymond, S. Rogerson, A. Rose, C. Seez, P. Sharp[†], A. Tapper, M. Vazquez Acosta, T. Virdee, S.C. Zenz

Imperial College, London, United Kingdom

J.E. Cole, P.R. Hobson, A. Khan, P. Kyberd, D. Leggat, D. Leslie, I.D. Reid, P. Symonds, L. Teodorescu, M. Turner

Brunel University, Uxbridge, United Kingdom

J. Dittmann, K. Hatakeyama, A. Kasmir, H. Liu, T. Scarborough, Z. Wu

Baylor University, Waco, USA

O. Charaf, S.I. Cooper, C. Henderson, P. Rumerio

The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, USA

A. Avetisyan, T. Bose, C. Fantasia, P. Lawson, C. Richardson, J. Rohlf, J. St. John, L. Sulak

Boston University, Boston, USA

J. Alimena, E. Berry, S. Bhattacharya, G. Christopher, D. Cutts, Z. Demiragli, N. Dhingra, A. Ferapontov, A. Garabedian, U. Heintz, G. Kukartsev, E. Laird, G. Landsberg, M. Luk, M. Narain, M. Segala, T. Sinthuprasith, T. Speer, J. Swanson

Brown University, Providence, USA

R. Breedon, G. Breto, M. Calderon De La Barca Sanchez, S. Chauhan, M. Chertok, J. Conway, R. Conway, P.T. Cox, R. Erbacher, M. Gardner, W. Ko, R. Lander, M. Mulhearn, D. Pellett, J. Pilot, F. Ricci-Tam, S. Shalhout, J. Smith, M. Squires, D. Stolp, M. Tripathi, S. Wilbur, R. Yohay

University of California, Davis, Davis, USA

R. Cousins, P. Everaerts, C. Farrell, J. Hauser, M. Ignatenko, G. Rakness, E. Takasugi, V. Valuev, M. Weber

University of California, Los Angeles, USA

K. Burt, R. Clare, J. Ellison, J.W. Gary, G. Hanson, J. Heilman, M. Ivova Rikova, P. Jandir, E. Kennedy, F. Lacroix, O.R. Long, A. Luthra, M. Malberti, M. Olmedo Negrete, A. Shrinivas, S. Sumowidagdo, S. Wimpenny

University of California, Riverside, Riverside, USA

J.G. Branson, G.B. Cerati, S. Cittolin, R.T. D'Agnolo, A. Holzner, R. Kelley, D. Klein, J. Letts, I. Macneill, D. Olivito, S. Padhi, C. Palmer, M. Pieri, M. Sani, V. Sharma, S. Simon, M. Tadel, Y. Tu, A. Vartak, C. Welke, F. Würthwein, A. Yagil, G. Zevi Della Porta

University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, USA

D. Barge, J. Bradmiller-Feld, C. Campagnari, T. Danielson, A. Dishaw, V. Dutta, K. Flowers, M. Franco Sevilla, P. Geffert, C. George, F. Golf, L. Gouskos, J. Incandela, C. Justus, N. Mccoll, S.D. Mullin, J. Richman, D. Stuart, W. To, C. West, J. Yoo

University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, USA

A. Apresyan, A. Bornheim, J. Bunn, Y. Chen, J. Duarte, A. Mott, H.B. Newman, C. Pena, M. Pierini, M. Spiropulu, J.R. Vlimant, R. Wilkinson, S. Xie, R.Y. Zhu

California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, USA

V. Azzolini, A. Calamba, B. Carlson, T. Ferguson, Y. Iiyama, M. Paulini, J. Russ, H. Vogel, I. Vorobiev

Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA

J.P. Cumalat, W.T. Ford, A. Gaz, M. Krohn, E. Luiggi Lopez, U. Nauenberg, J.G. Smith, K. Stenson, S.R. Wagner

University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, USA

J. Alexander, A. Chatterjee, J. Chaves, J. Chu, S. Dittmer, N. Eggert, N. Mirman, G. Nicolas Kaufman, J.R. Patterson, A. Ryd, E. Salvati, L. Skinnari, W. Sun, W.D. Teo, J. Thom, J. Thompson, J. Tucker, Y. Weng, L. Winstrom, P. Wittich

Cornell University, Ithaca, USA

D. Winn

Fairfield University, Fairfield, USA

S. Abdullin, M. Albrow, J. Anderson, G. Apollinari, L.A.T. Bauerdick, A. Beretvas, J. Berryhill, P.C. Bhat, G. Bolla, K. Burkett, J.N. Butler, H.W.K. Cheung, F. Chlebana, S. Cihangir, V.D. Elvira, I. Fisk, J. Freeman, E. Gottschalk, L. Gray, D. Green, S. Grünendahl, O. Gutsche, J. Hanlon, D. Hare, R.M. Harris, J. Hirschauer, B. Hooberman, S. Jindariani, M. Johnson, U. Joshi, B. Klima, B. Kreis, S. Kwan[†], J. Linacre, D. Lincoln, R. Lipton, T. Liu, J. Lykken, K. Maeshima, J.M. Marraffino, V.I. Martinez Outschoorn, S. Maruyama, D. Mason, P. McBride, P. Merkel, K. Mishra, S. Mrenna, S. Nahn, C. Newman-Holmes, V. O'Dell, O. Prokofyev, E. Sexton-Kennedy, S. Sharma, A. Soha, W.J. Spalding, L. Spiegel, L. Taylor, S. Tkaczyk, N.V. Tran, L. Uplegger, E.W. Vaandering, R. Vidal, A. Whitbeck, J. Whitmore, F. Yang

Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Batavia, USA

D. Acosta, P. Avery, P. Bortignon, D. Bourilkov, M. Carver, D. Curry, S. Das, M. De Gruttola, G.P. Di Giovanni, R.D. Field, M. Fisher, I.K. Furic, J. Hugon, J. Konigsberg, A. Korytov, T. Kypreos, J.F. Low, K. Matchev, H. Mei, P. Milenov⁵¹, G. Mitselmakher, L. Muniz, A. Rinkevicius, L. Shchutska, M. Snowball, D. Sperka, J. Yelton, M. Zakaria

University of Florida, Gainesville, USA

S. Hewamanage, S. Linn, P. Markowitz, G. Martinez, J.L. Rodriguez

Florida International University, Miami, USA

T. Adams, A. Askew, J. Bochenek, B. Diamond, J. Haas, S. Hagopian, V. Hagopian, K.F. Johnson, H. Prosper, V. Veeraraghavan, M. Weinberg

Florida State University, Tallahassee, USA

M.M. Baarmand, M. Hohlmann, H. Kalakhety, F. Yumiceva

Florida Institute of Technology, Melbourne, USA

M.R. Adams, L. Apanasevich, D. Berry, R.R. Betts, I. Bucinskaite, R. Cavanaugh, O. Evdokimov, L. Gauthier, C.E. Gerber, D.J. Hofman, P. Kurt, C. O'Brien, I.D. Sandoval Gonzalez, C. Silkworth, P. Turner, N. Varelas

University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Chicago, USA

B. Bilki⁵², W. Clarida, K. Dilsiz, M. Haytmyradov, J.-P. Merlo, H. Mermerkaya⁵³, A. Mestvirishvili, A. Moeller, J. Nachtman, H. Ogul, Y. Onel, F. Ozok⁴⁵, A. Penzo, R. Rahmat, S. Sen, P. Tan, E. Tiras, J. Wetzel, K. Yi

The University of Iowa, Iowa City, USA

I. Anderson, B.A. Barnett, B. Blumenfeld, S. Bolognesi, D. Fehling, A.V. Gritsan, P. Maksimovic, C. Martin, M. Swartz, M. Xiao

Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA

P. Baringer, A. Bean, G. Benelli, C. Bruner, J. Gray, R.P. Kenny III, D. Majumder, M. Malek, M. Murray, D. Noonan, S. Sanders, J. Sekaric, R. Stringer, Q. Wang, J.S. Wood

The University of Kansas, Lawrence, USA

I. Chakaberia, A. Ivanov, K. Kaadze, S. Khalil, M. Makouski, Y. Maravin, L.K. Saini, N. Skhirtladze, I. Svintradze

Kansas State University, Manhattan, USA

J. Gronberg, D. Lange, F. Rebassoo, D. Wright

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, USA

A. Baden, A. Belloni, B. Calvert, S.C. Eno, J.A. Gomez, N.J. Hadley, S. Jabeen, R.G. Kellogg, T. Kolberg, Y. Lu, A.C. Mignerey, K. Pedro, A. Skuja, M.B. Tonjes, S.C. Tonwar

University of Maryland, College Park, USA

A. Apyan, R. Barbieri, K. Bierwagen, W. Busza, I.A. Cali, L. Di Matteo, G. Gomez Ceballos, M. Goncharov, D. Gulhan, M. Klute, Y.S. Lai, Y.-J. Lee, A. Levin, P.D. Luckey, C. Paus, D. Ralph, C. Roland, G. Roland, G.S.F. Stephans, K. Sumorok, D. Velicanu, J. Veverka, B. Wyslouch, M. Yang, M. Zanetti, V. Zhukova

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, USA

B. Dahmes, A. Gude, S.C. Kao, K. Klapoetke, Y. Kubota, J. Mans, S. Nourbakhsh, N. Pastika, R. Rusack, A. Singovsky, N. Tambe, J. Turkewitz

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA

J.G. Acosta, S. Oliveros

University of Mississippi, Oxford, USA

E. Avdeeva, K. Bloom, S. Bose, D.R. Claes, A. Dominguez, R. Gonzalez Suarez, J. Keller, D. Knowlton, I. Kravchenko, J. Lazo-Flores, F. Meier, F. Ratnikov, G.R. Snow, M. Zvada

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, USA

J. Dolen, A. Godshalk, I. Iashvili, A. Kharchilava, A. Kumar, S. Rappoccio

State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, USA

G. Alverson, E. Barberis, D. Baumgartel, M. Chasco, A. Massironi, D.M. Morse, D. Nash, T. Orimoto, D. Trocino, R.-J. Wang, D. Wood, J. Zhang

Northeastern University, Boston, USA

K.A. Hahn, A. Kubik, N. Mucia, N. Odell, B. Pollack, A. Pozdnyakov, M. Schmitt, S. Stoynev, K. Sung, M. Velasco, S. Won

Northwestern University, Evanston, USA

A. Brinkerhoff, K.M. Chan, A. Drozdetskiy, M. Hildreth, C. Jessop, D.J. Karmgard, N. Kellams, K. Lannon, S. Lynch, N. Marinelli, Y. Musienko²⁸, T. Pearson, M. Planer, R. Ruchti, G. Smith, N. Valls, M. Wayne, M. Wolf, A. Woodard

University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, USA

L. Antonelli, J. Brinson, B. Bylsma, L.S. Durkin, S. Flowers, A. Hart, C. Hill, R. Hughes, K. Kotov, T.Y. Ling, W. Luo, D. Puigh, M. Rodenburg, B.L. Winer, H. Wolfe, H.W. Wulsin

The Ohio State University, Columbus, USA

O. Driga, P. Elmer, J. Hardenbrook, P. Hebda, S.A. Koay, P. Lujan, D. Marlow, T. Medvedeva, M. Mooney, J. Olsen, P. Piroué, X. Quan, H. Saka, D. Stickland², C. Tully, J.S. Werner, A. Zuranski

Princeton University, Princeton, USA

E. Brownson, S. Malik, H. Mendez, J.E. Ramirez Vargas

University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez, USA

V.E. Barnes, D. Benedetti, D. Bortoletto, M. De Mattia, L. Gutay, Z. Hu, M.K. Jha, M. Jones, K. Jung, M. Kress, N. Leonardo, D.H. Miller, N. Neumeister, F. Primavera, B.C. Radburn-Smith, X. Shi, I. Shipsey, D. Silvers, A. Svyatkovskiy, F. Wang, W. Xie, L. Xu, J. Zablocki

Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA

N. Parashar, J. Stupak

Purdue University Calumet, Hammond, USA

A. Adair, B. Akgun, K.M. Ecklund, F.J.M. Geurts, W. Li, B. Michlin, B.P. Padley, R. Redjimi, J. Roberts, J. Zabel

Rice University, Houston, USA

B. Betchart, A. Bodek, P. de Barbaro, R. Demina, Y. Eshaq, T. Ferbel, M. Galanti, A. Garcia-Bellido, P. Goldenzweig, J. Han, A. Harel, O. Hindrichs, A. Khukhunaishvili, S. Korjenevski, G. Petrillo, D. Vishnevskiy

University of Rochester, Rochester, USA

R. Ciesielski, L. Demortier, K. Goulianos, C. Mesropian

The Rockefeller University, New York, USA

S. Arora, A. Barker, J.P. Chou, C. Contreras-Campana, E. Contreras-Campana, D. Duggan, D. Ferencek, Y. Gershtein, R. Gray, E. Halkiadakis, D. Hidas, S. Kaplan, A. Lath, S. Panwalkar, M. Park, R. Patel, S. Salur, S. Schnetzer, D. Sheffield, S. Somalwar, R. Stone, S. Thomas, P. Thomassen, M. Walker

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Piscataway, USA

K. Rose, S. Spanier, A. York

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA

O. Bouhali⁵⁴, A. Castaneda Hernandez, R. Eusebi, W. Flanagan, J. Gilmore, T. Kamon⁵⁵, V. Khotilovich, V. Krutelyov, R. Montalvo, I. Osipenkov, Y. Pakhotin, A. Perloff, J. Roe, A. Rose, A. Safonov, I. Suarez, A. Tatarinov, K.A. Ulmer

Texas A&M University, College Station, USA

N. Akchurin, C. Cowden, J. Damgov, C. Dragoiu, P.R. Duderu, J. Faulkner, K. Kovitangoon, S. Kunori, S.W. Lee, T. Libeiro, I. Volobouev

Texas Tech University, Lubbock, USA

E. Appelt, A.G. Delannoy, S. Greene, A. Gurrola, W. Johns, C. Maguire, Y. Mao, A. Melo, M. Sharma, P. Sheldon, B. Snook, S. Tuo, J. Velkovska

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, USA

M.W. Arenton, S. Boutle, B. Cox, B. Francis, J. Goodell, R. Hirosky, A. Ledovskoy, H. Li, C. Lin, C. Neu, J. Wood

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA

C. Clarke, R. Harr, P.E. Karchin, C. Kottachchi Kankanamge Don, P. Lamichhane, J. Sturdy

Wayne State University, Detroit, USA

D.A. Belknap, D. Carlsmith, M. Cepeda, S. Dasu, L. Dodd, S. Duric, E. Friis, R. Hall-Wilton, M. Herndon, A. Hervé, P. Klabbers, A. Lanaro, C. Lazaridis, A. Levine, R. Loveless, A. Mohapatra, I. Ojalvo, T. Perry, G.A. Pierro, G. Polese, I. Ross, T. Sarangi, A. Savin, W.H. Smith, D. Taylor, C. Vuosalo, N. Woods

University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA

[†] Deceased.

¹ Also at Vienna University of Technology, Vienna, Austria.

² Also at CERN, European Organization for Nuclear Research, Geneva, Switzerland.

³ Also at Institut Pluridisciplinaire Hubert Curien, Université de Strasbourg, Université de Haute Alsace Mulhouse, CNRS/IN2P3, Strasbourg, France.

- ⁴ Also at National Institute of Chemical Physics and Biophysics, Tallinn, Estonia.
- ⁵ Also at Skobeltsyn Institute of Nuclear Physics, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia.
- ⁶ Also at Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Campinas, Brazil.
- ⁷ Also at Laboratoire Leprince-Ringuet, Ecole Polytechnique, IN2P3–CNRS, Palaiseau, France.
- ⁸ Also at Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, Dubna, Russia.
- ⁹ Also at Suez University, Suez, Egypt.
- ¹⁰ Also at Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt.
- ¹¹ Also at Fayoum University, El-Fayoum, Egypt.
- ¹² Also at British University in Egypt, Cairo, Egypt.
- ¹³ Now at Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt.
- ¹⁴ Also at Université de Haute Alsace, Mulhouse, France.
- ¹⁵ Also at Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus, Germany.
- ¹⁶ Also at Institute of Nuclear Research ATOMKI, Debrecen, Hungary.
- ¹⁷ Also at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary.
- ¹⁸ Also at University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary.
- ¹⁹ Also at University of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, India.
- ²⁰ Now at King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- ²¹ Also at University of Ruhuna, Matara, Sri Lanka.
- ²² Also at Isfahan University of Technology, Isfahan, Iran.
- ²³ Also at University of Tehran, Department of Engineering Science, Tehran, Iran.
- ²⁴ Also at Plasma Physics Research Center, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.
- ²⁵ Also at Università degli Studi di Siena, Siena, Italy.
- ²⁶ Also at Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)–IN2P3, Paris, France.
- ²⁷ Also at Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA.
- ²⁸ Also at Institute for Nuclear Research, Moscow, Russia.
- ²⁹ Also at St. Petersburg State Polytechnical University, St. Petersburg, Russia.
- ³⁰ Also at National Research Nuclear University 'Moscow Engineering Physics Institute' (MEPhI), Moscow, Russia.
- ³¹ Also at Faculty of Physics, University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia.
- ³² Also at Facoltà Ingegneria, Università di Roma, Roma, Italy.
- ³³ Also at Scuola Normale e Sezione dell'INFN, Pisa, Italy.
- ³⁴ Also at University of Athens, Athens, Greece.
- ³⁵ Also at Paul Scherrer Institut, Villigen, Switzerland.
- ³⁶ Also at Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Moscow, Russia.
- ³⁷ Also at Albert Einstein Center for Fundamental Physics, Bern, Switzerland.
- ³⁸ Also at Gaziosmanpasa University, Tokat, Turkey.
- ³⁹ Also at Adiyaman University, Adiyaman, Turkey.
- ⁴⁰ Also at Cag University, Mersin, Turkey.
- ⁴¹ Also at Anadolu University, Eskisehir, Turkey.
- ⁴² Also at Ozyegin University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁴³ Also at Izmir Institute of Technology, Izmir, Turkey.
- ⁴⁴ Also at Necmettin Erbakan University, Konya, Turkey.
- ⁴⁵ Also at Mimar Sinan University, Istanbul, Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁴⁶ Also at Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁴⁷ Also at Kafkas University, Kars, Turkey.
- ⁴⁸ Also at Yildiz Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁴⁹ Also at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Didcot, United Kingdom.
- ⁵⁰ Also at School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom.
- ⁵¹ Also at University of Belgrade, Faculty of Physics and Vinca Institute of Nuclear Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia.
- ⁵² Also at Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne, USA.
- ⁵³ Also at Erzincan University, Erzincan, Turkey.
- ⁵⁴ Also at Texas A&M University at Qatar, Doha, Qatar.
- ⁵⁵ Also at Kyungpook National University, Daegu, Republic of Korea.