





Vector Boson Scattering at the LHC: A Combined Measurement with CMS Run 2 Data

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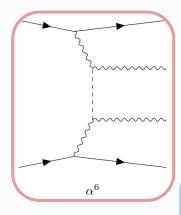
Vector Boson Scattering

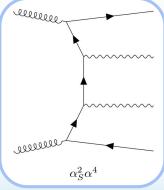


Vector boson scattering (VBS) happens at the LHC when the two incoming partons radiate electroweak vector bosons that interact with each other

- At LO, the pure EWK signal is $\sim \alpha^6$, while the mixed QCD induced $\sim \alpha_c^2 \alpha^4$ and the interference is $\sim \alpha_c \alpha^5$
- Without photons, VBS presents a 6-fermions final state:
 2 jets coming from the initial state partons, 4 coming from the scattered bosons
- 2 highly energetic jets ("tagging" jets):
 - o large gap in **η** (**|Δη_{::}|)**
 - o high jet invariant mass (m_{ii})
- leptons (lv or 2l) from the boson are emitted centrally with respect to the tagging jets ($\mathbf{Z}_{\mathbf{v}}$)

$$Z_X = \eta_X - \frac{1}{2}(\eta_{j_1} + \eta_{j_2})$$







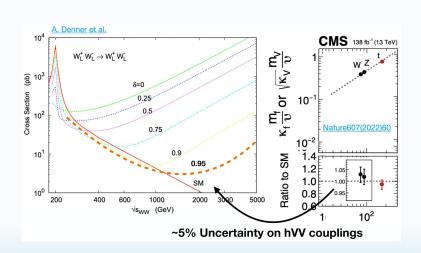


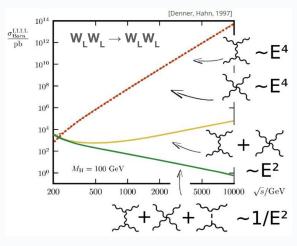
Vector Boson Scattering



VBS is a fundamental probe to understand the electroweak symmetry breaking (Brout-Englert-Higgs) mechanism

The presence of the Higgs field regularizes the VBS cross-section cancelling exactly the ~E² divergence of bosonic-only processes



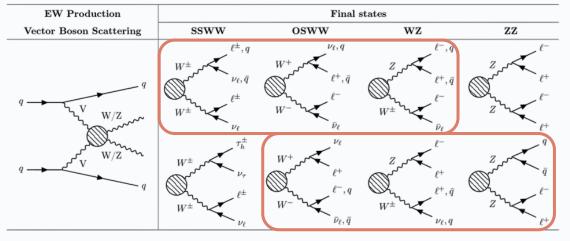


This is a very delicate equilibrium: if H boson is **not** the SM one (δ), cancellation is only partial, expected divergence of $V_L V_L \rightarrow V_L V_L$ cross section (a) high energies \rightarrow New physics









Shorthand name	Production modes	Final state	N. ℓ	Reference
WV	$pp ightarrow W^+W^-jj, W^\pm W^\pm jj, W^\pm Zjj$	ℓu jjjj	1	[1]
SSWW (e, μ)	pp $ ightarrow$ W $^\pm$ W $^\pm$ jj	$\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[2]
OSWW	$pp o W^+W^-jj$	$\ell^+\ell^-$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[3]
ZV	$pp o W^\pm Zjj, ZZjj$	2 <i>ℓjjjj</i> j	2	[4]
SSWW ($ au_{h}$)	$pp o W^\pm W^\pm jj$	$\ell^{\pm} au_{h}^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[5]
WZ	$p p ightarrow W^\pm Z j j$	3ℓvjj	3	[2]
ZZ(4ℓ)	pp → ZZjj	4 ℓjj	4	[6]



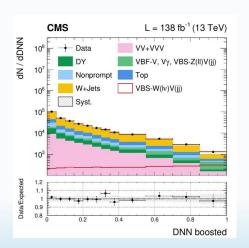


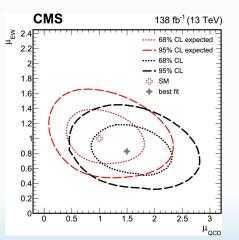
1 lepton

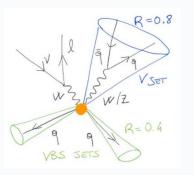


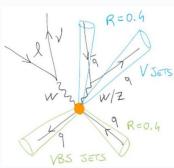
First evidence for WW/WZ semileptonic VBS. Final state requires 1 charged lepton + MET and 4(3) jets.

- Resolved regime: 4 AK4 jets
- Boosted regime: 2 AK4 + 1 AK8 (boosted decay of the V boson)
- DNN trained in each regime to improve performance









Results include a 2D fit for the pure EWK and mixed-QCD production of a W + jets

$$\mu_{EW} = 0.85 \pm 0.12(stat)^{+0.19}_{-0.17}(syst) = 0.85^{+0.23}_{-0.21}$$

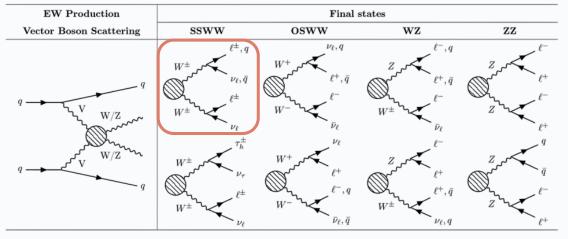
$$\mu_{EW+QCD} = 0.97 \pm 0.06(stat)^{+0.19}_{-0.21}(syst) = 0.97^{+0.20}_{-0.22}$$

in agreement with the SM expectations









Shorthand na	me	Production modes	Final state	N. ℓ	Reference
WV		$pp o W^+W^-jj$, $W^\pm W^\pm jj$, $W^\pm Zjj$	ℓu jjjj	1	[1]
SSWW (e , μ	.)	pp $ ightarrow$ W $^\pm$ W $^\pm$ jj	$\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[2]
OSWW		pp $ ightarrow$ W $^+$ W $^-$ jj	$\ell^+\ell^-$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[3]
ZV		$pp o W^\pm Zjj, ZZjj$	2 <i>ℓjjjj</i> j	2	[4]
SSWW ($ au_{h}$)		$pp o W^\pm W^\pm jj$	$\ell^{\pm} au_{h}^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[5]
WZ		$pp o W^\pm Zjj$	3ℓvjj	3	[2]
ZZ(4ℓ)		pp → ZZjj	4 ℓjj	4	[6]





2 leptons (I)



SSWW VBS final state: 2 (VBS) jets and 2 isolated lepton + MET.

Significant contribution from VBS-WZ (with 1 lepton lost) → W[±]W[±] and WZ cross-section measurement is simultaneous

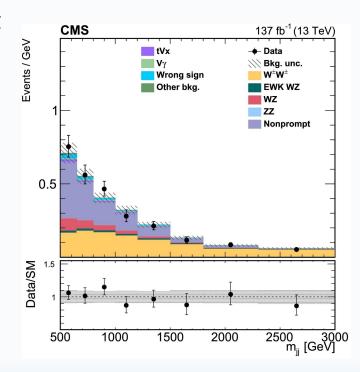
Other backgrounds:

- Non-prompt: tight-to-loose ratio relaxing one lepton requirements
- Wrong-sign: efficiency correction factors estimated in Z events
- QCD-induced W[±]W[±] + 2 jets, W[±]Z + 2 jets
- QCD and EW ZZ + 2 jets

Observables:

- EW W[±]W[±] signal is extracted with a 2D fit $m_{ij} \times m_{jj}$ (8x4 bins)
- m_{ii} used to constrain QCD-WZ and ZZ normalizations

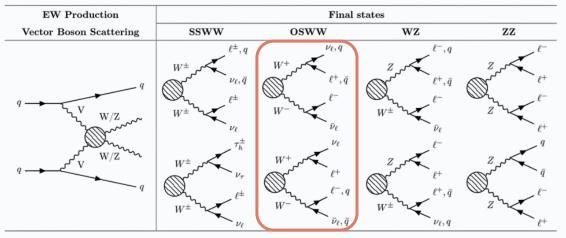
VBS EW production of $W^{\pm}W^{\pm}$ is observed with a significance >> 5σ











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ZV	pp → W [±] Zjj, ZZjj	2 ℓjjjj	2	[4]
SSWW ($ au_h$)	$pp ightarrow W^\pm W^\pm jj$	$\ell^{\pm} au_{h}^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[5]
WZ	$p p ightarrow W^\pm Z j j$	3ℓvjj	3	[2]
ZZ(4ℓ)	pp → ZZjj	4 ℓjj	4	[6]





2 leptons (II)

First observation of the EW production of a leptonically decaying W⁺W⁻ pair + jets. Final state requires 2 leptons + MET + 2 (VBS) jets. Different background composition depending on SF / DF channels:

- (SF) ee, μμ: major contribution from DY
- (DF) $e\mu$: reduced DY contribution, leading sensitivity

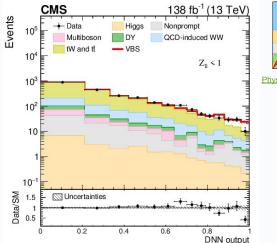
Lepton-flavor dependent signal extraction:

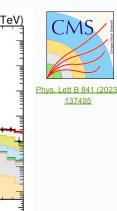
- (SF): 5 m_{jj} bins for m_{jj} \geq 500 and $|\Delta \eta_{jj}| \geq$ 3.5, 3 bins in $|\Delta \eta_{jj}|$ and m_{ij} with low sensitivity
- (DF): DNN trained against main backgrounds. Different model trained depending on Z_{II} value

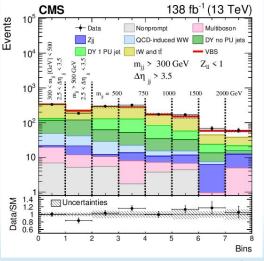
The leptonic VBS W⁺W⁻ cross section is observed with a significance of 5.6σ (5.2 expected)

 $\sigma_{EW} = 10.2 \pm 2.0 \text{fb}$

in agreement with the SM expectations (9.1 ± 0.6 fb)



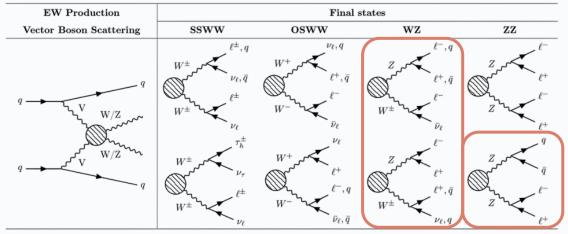












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WV	$pp o W^+W^-jj, W^\pm W^\pm jj, W^\pm Zjj$	ℓu jjjj	1	[1]
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ZV	pp → W [±] Zjj, ZZjj	2 ℓjjjj	2	[4]
SSWW ($ au_h$)	pp $ ightarrow$ W $^\pm$ W $^\pm$ jj	$\ell^{\pm} au_{h}^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[5]
WZ	$pp o W^\pm Zjj$	3ℓvjj	3	[2]
ZZ(4ℓ)	pp o ZZjj	4 ℓjj	4	[6]





2 leptons (III)

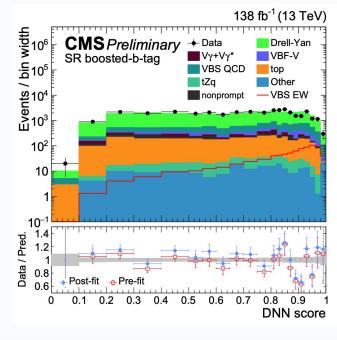


Measurement for ZW/ZZ semileptonic VBS. Final state requires 2 OS charged leptons and 4(3) jets.

- Resolved regime: 4 AK4 jets
- Boosted regime: 2 AK4 + 1 AK8 (boosted decay of the V boson)
- SR splitted in btag/bveto to account for different mismodeling in the DY events
- Multiple DNNs trained in each regime and used to extract the signal cross-section
- $p_T(Z)$ x VBS trialing jet p_T is used in the DY CRs to constrain and correct the main background

The semileptonic VBS ZV cross section is measured with a significance of 1.3 σ (1.8 expected)

$$\mu_{EW} = 0.63^{+0.53}_{-0.51}$$



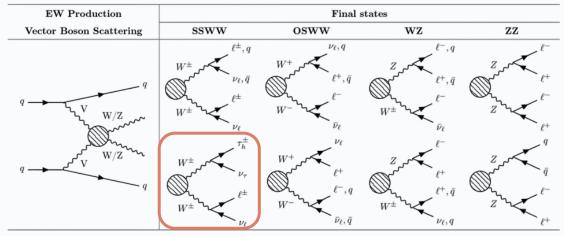
in agreement with the SM expectations







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Shorthand name	Production modes	Final state	N. ℓ	Reference
WV	$pp o W^+W^-jj, W^\pm W^\pm jj, W^\pm Zjj$	ℓu jjjj	1	[1]
SSWW (e, μ)	$pp o W^\pm W^\pm jj$	$\ell^{\pm}\ell^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[2]
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ZV	$pp o W^\pm Zjj, ZZjj$	2 ℓjjjj	2	[4]
SSWW ($ au_h$)	$pp o W^\pm W^\pm jj$	$\ell^{\pm} au_{h}^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[5]
WZ	pp $ ightarrow$ W $^\pm$ Zjj	3 <i>ℓν</i> jj	3	[2]
ZZ(4ℓ)	pp → ZZjj	4 ℓjj	4	[6]





2 leptons (IV)

OS CR



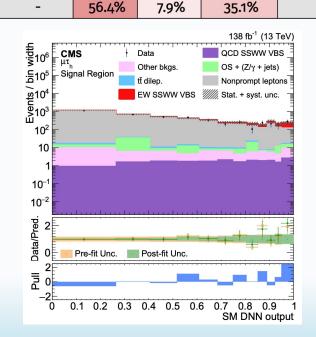
- SSWW VBS with 1 tau: $\tau_{\rm h}$ exploited for the first time in VBS. Final state requires 2 (VBS) jets, 1 lepton and 1 $\tau_{\rm h}$ + MET
- τ_h: reconstructed using hadron-plus-strips (HPS) algorithm
 [7]. DeepTau [8] is also used to distinguish them from quarks, gluons or charged leptons.
- DNN trained for enhance signal significance in SR, also used in CRs to boost separation in the fit

Results include a 2D fit for the pure EWK and mixed-QCD VBS production

EW W[±]W[±] jj
$$\rightarrow$$
l $au_{
m h}$ 2 au jj significance of 2.7 σ (2.9 EW + QCD)
$$\mu_{EW}=1.44^{+0.63}_{-0.53} \qquad \mu_{EW+QCD}=1.43^{+0.60}_{-0.54}$$

in agreement with the SM expectations

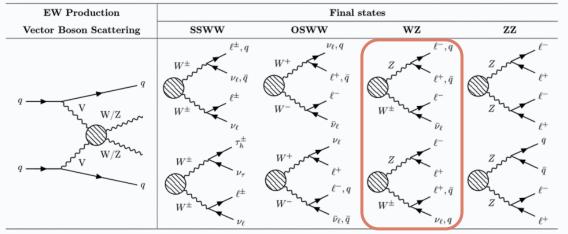
					arXiv:2410.04210
Region	EW-VBS	Fake	tī	OS+ Z/γ	QCD-VBS
SR $e au_h$	3.0%	92.2%	0.9%	2.0%	0.3%
SR $\mu au_{ extsf{h}}$	3.1%	93.3%	0.5%	1.7%	0.3%
t t CR	-	37.1%	61.6%	8.2%	-











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WZ	$pp o W^\pm Zjj$	3 ℓν j j	3	[2]
ZZ(4ℓ)	pp → ZZjj	4 ℓjj	4	[6]

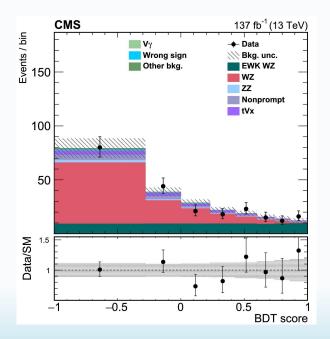


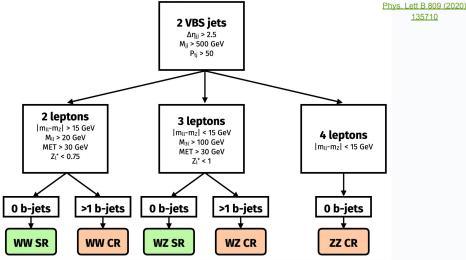


3 leptons



The VBS WZ production is treated as a background for the W[±]W[±] analysis, but since is an interesting process itself, it's measured together with the VBS W[±]W[±]





QCD-WZ induced events are the main background:

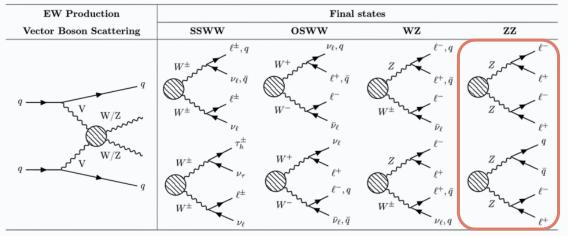
BTD is trained in the WZ SR and used to extract the signal

VBS EW production of W $^{\pm}$ Z is observed with a significance of 6.8 σ (5.3 expected)









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ZV	$pp o W^\pm Zjj, ZZjj$	2 <i>ℓjjjj</i> j	2	[4]
SSWW ($ au_{h}$)	$pp o W^\pm W^\pm jj$	$\ell^{\pm} au_{h}^{\pm}$ 2 $ u$ jj	2	[5]
WZ	$pp o W^\pm Zjj$	3ℓνjj	3	[2]
ZZ(4ℓ)	pp → ZZjj	4 ℓjj	4	[6]





4 leptons



Evidence for EW production of four charged leptons. Final state with 2 (VBS) jets and two OS same-flavor lepton pairs consistent with Z decays

- ZZ-inclusive region: m_{ii} > 100
- loose VBS-enriched: $|\tilde{\Delta} \eta_{ij}| > 2.4$, $m_{jj} > 400$
- tight VBS-enriched: $|\Delta \eta_{ij}|^2 > 2.4$, $m_{ij}^2 > 1$ TeV
- CR defined inverting one of the loose VBS conditions

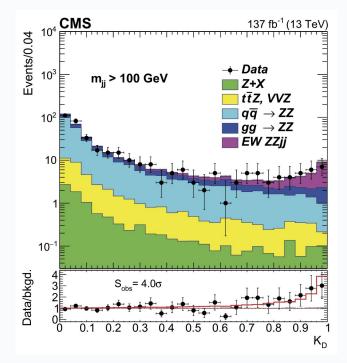
Signal is extracted with a Matrix Element Discriminant (K_D) after having check the performances against a BDT.

Evidence for VBS EW production of ZZ with 4.0 σ (3.5 expected)

Inclusive region: $\sigma_{EW} = 0.33^{+0.11}_{-0.10}(stat)^{+0.04}_{-0.03}(syst)$ fb

loose VBS-enriched: $\sigma_{EW} = 0.180^{+0.070}_{-0.060}(stat)^{+0.021}_{-0.012}(syst)$ fb

tight VBS-enriched: $\sigma_{EW} = 0.09^{+0.04}_{-0.03}(stat) \pm 0.02(syst)$ fb



in agreement with the SM expectations

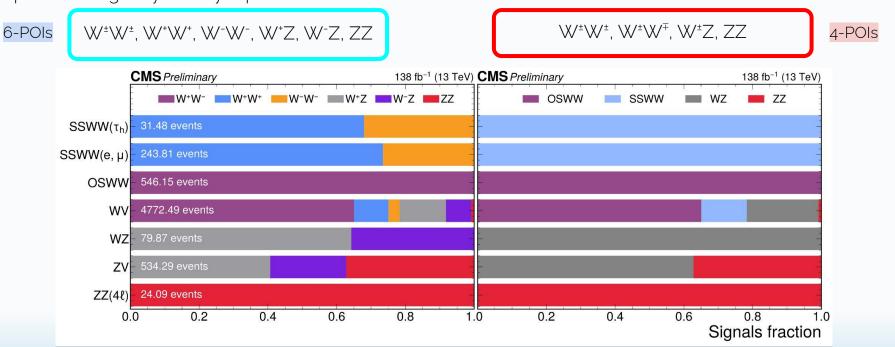




Statistical Model



Two combination models are considered: one with four parameters of interest (4-POIs), providing a global probe of VBS processes, and another with six parameters of interest (6-POIs), which extends the analysis to test the expected charge asymmetry in production.



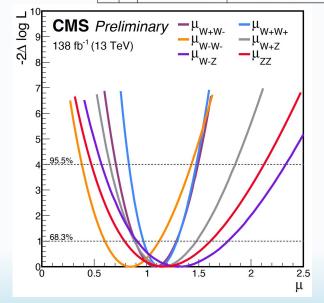


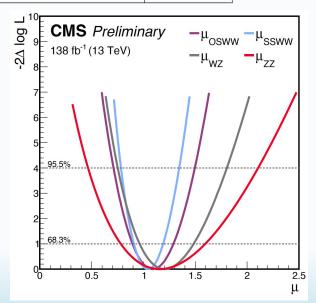


Results



		osww	SS	ww	V	VZ	ZZ
4-POI	μ	1.09 ^{+0.21} _{-0.18} (+0.20)	1.04_0.14 (+0.14)		1.19 ^{+0.2} _{-0.2}	$1.15^{+0.44}_{-0.37} \left(^{+0.44}_{-0.37}\right)$	
	σ	6.2 (6.1)	≫ 5	(≫ 5)	7.0	(5.5)	4.0 (3.6)
		W+W-	W+W+	W^-W^-	W ⁺ Z	W^-Z	ZZ
6-POI	μ	1.08+0.20 (+0.18)	1.11 ^{+0.17} _{-0.15} (+0.14)	$0.84^{+0.27}_{-0.24} \left(^{+0.28}_{-0.25}\right)$	1.15+0.32 (+0.32)	1.30+0.47 (+0.44)	1.16+0.44 (+0.42)
	σ	6.1 (6.1)	≫ 5 (≫ 5)	4.0 (4.6)	5.7 (4.7)	4.2 (3.2)	4.0 (3.6)









Results

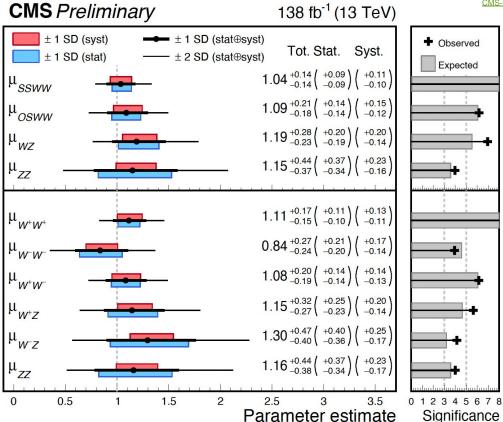


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Most channels show an excess.

Signal modeling is currently only at LO; NLO corrections can reduce yields by up to 40% in the high-energy tails → even larger excesses are expected

- Several analyses are now equally affected by systematic and statistical uncertainties, opening the door to polarized VBS studies
- All charged coupling coefficients
 have been fitted simultaneously,
 providing individual evidence for each
 and achieving a 5–10% improvement



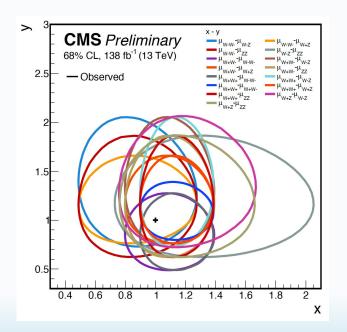


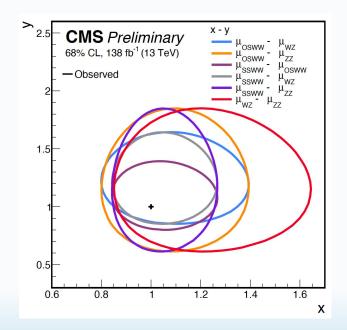


Results



A simultaneous scan is performed over pairs of signal strengths, with the remaining μ parameters profiled alongside the nuisance parameters. The results show only mild correlations and are in good agreement with SM expectations.







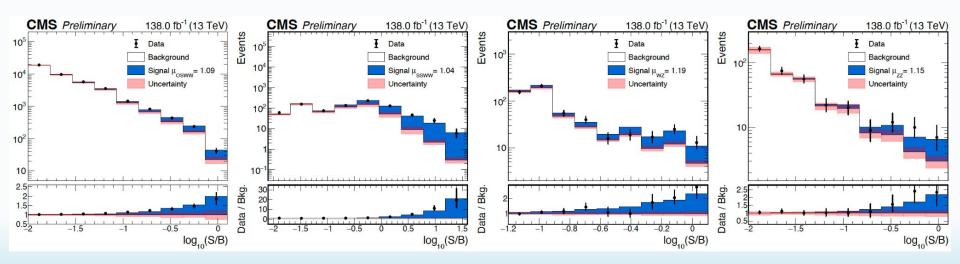


S/B plots



Prefit log(S/B) plots show good agreement with the SM prediction at LO, differentially

- For all the input templates bins, $log[S(\mu=1)/B]$ is computed
- Postfit yields of signal, backgrounds and data is assigned to the leading S distribution: plots are mutually exclusive (data is not shown twice)
- Uncertainty on the background prediction is computed with 500 toys





Conclusions



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- First VBS combination including five fully leptonic and two semileptonic channels
- Two statistical models used: one with 4 and one with 6 parameters of interest
- Results based on 1D and 2D profile likelihood scans show good agreement with the SM, even in log(S/B) bins
- Combined fit improves signal strength $\langle \mu \rangle$ precision by 5–10% over individual analyses
- A mild excess of data observed compared to predictions
- First simultaneous evidence for all six charged VBS parameters

This VBS combination marks a first step toward a global interpretation of VBS processes. Future developments will explore EFT interpretations and polarization-sensitive measurements.





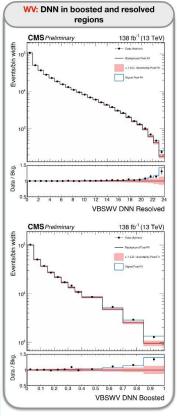


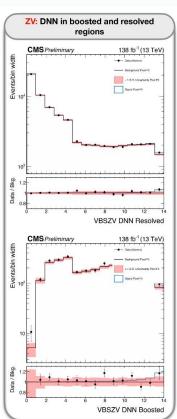
Backup

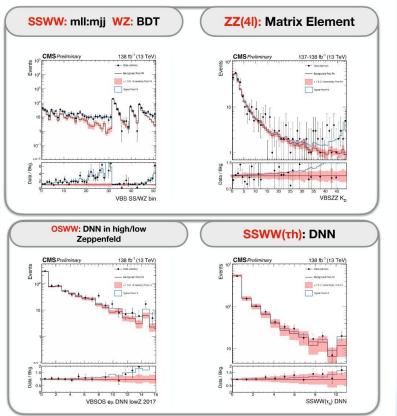
















Overlap (I)



Table 14: Summary table of the signal regions defined in the analyses entering the combination along with some of the selections that make them orthogonal to each other

William Source of the Servetions transfer transfer of the Servetion of the									
Region	n. ℓ	ℓ veto	SF	∑charge	b-veto	m_{ll}	MET	n. AK4	
WV-SR	1	yes	-	1	yes	-	-	(≥ 4) or $(\ge 2 + \ge 1 \text{ AK8})$	
SS-SR	2	yes	-	2	yes	> 20 GeV	> 30 GeV	≥ 2	
OS-SR(SF)	2	yes	Yes	0	yes	> 120 GeV	> 60 GeV	≥ 2	
OS-SR(DF)	2	yes	No	0	yes	> 50 GeV	> 20 GeV	≥ 2	
ZV-SR(btag)	2	yes	Yes	0	no	∈ [76, 106] GeV	-	(≥ 4) or $(\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$	
ZV-SR(bveto)	2	yes	Yes	0	yes	∈ [76, 106] GeV	-	(≥ 4) or $(\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$	
WZ-SR	3	yes	Yes (Z)	1	yes	∈ [76, 106] GeV	> 30 GeV	≥ 2	
ZZ-SR	4	yes	Yes	0	-	∈ [60,120] GeV	-	≥ 2	

Table 15: Summary table of the signal regions defined in the analyses entering the combination along with some of the selections that make them orthogonal to each other

Total William Source of the Source trains attend of the Source of the So									
Region	n. ℓ	ℓ veto	SF	∑charge	b-veto	m_{ll}	MET	n. AK4	
SS-SR	2	yes	-	2	yes	> 20 GeV	> 30 GeV	≥ 2	
OS-SR(SF)	2	yes	Yes	0	yes	> 120 GeV	> 60 GeV	≥ 2	
OS-SR(DF)	2	yes	no	0	yes	> 50 GeV	> 20 GeV	≥ 2	
ZV-Top	2	yes	no	0	-	∈ [76, 106] GeV	-	$(\geq 4) \text{ or } (\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$	
OS-DY(DF)	2	yes	no	0	yes	∈ [50,80] GeV	> 20 GeV	≥ 2	
OS-DY(SF)	2	yes	yes	0	yes	∈ [76, 106] GeV	> 60 GeV	≥ 2	
ZV-DY(bveto)	2	yes	yes	0	yes	∈ [76, 106] GeV	-	$(\geq 4) \text{ or } (\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$	
ZV-SR(bveto)	2	yes	yes	0	yes	∈ [76, 106] GeV	-	(≥ 4) or $(\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$	





2 leptons - bveto



2 charged leptons regions (b-vetoed): Negligible overlap

- SSWW SRs orthogonal to all other b-vetoed regions thanks to $|\Sigma|$ charge = 2
- SSWW(τ_h) OS CR only region requiring a τ_h
- ZV Top CR partially overlap with OS-SR(DF), OS-DY(DF) → Removed ZV Top CR
- OSWW DY CR, ZV-DY and ZV-SR different MET requirements and target different kinematic regimes in number of jets: ZV SR $m_V \in [65, 105]$ inverted for ZV DY CR

Region	n. <i>ℓ</i>	ℓ/ au veto	SF	∑ charge	b-veto	m _{ll}	MET	n. AK4
SS-SR	2	yes/yes	-	2	yes	> 20 GeV	> 30 GeV	≥ 2
SS($ au$)-SR	2	yes/no	-	2	yes	-	> 50 GeV	≥ 2
SS($ au$)-OS	2	yes/no	-	o	yes	-	-	≥ 2
OS-SR(SF)	2	yes/-	Yes	o	yes	> 120 GeV	> 60 GeV	≥ 2
OS-SR(DF)	2	yes/-	no	o	yes	> 50 GeV	> 20 GeV	≥ 2
OS-DY(DF)	2	yes/-	no	О	yes	€ [50, 80] GeV	> 20 GeV	≥ 2
OS-DY(SF)	2	yes/-	yes	0	yes	€ [76, 106] GeV	> 60 GeV	≥ 2
ZV-DY(bveto)	2	yes/-	yes	o	yes	∈ [76, 106] GeV	-	(≥ 4) or $(\ge 2 + \ge 1$ AK8)
ZV-SR(bveto)	2	yes/-	yes	o	yes	€ [76, 106] GeV	-	(≥ 4) or $(\ge 2 + \ge 1$ AK8)





2 leptons - btag



Potential overlaps from 2 charged leptons regions (b-tag): <u>Negligible overlap</u>

- SSWW-btag orthogonal to all other b-tag regions thanks to $|\Sigma|$ charge = 2
- SSWW(τ_h) Top CR only region requiring a τ_h
- OSWW(ee, $\mu\mu$) Top CR orthogonal by SF requirements and $m_{_{||}}$ > 120 GeV
- ZV Top CR partially overlap with OS-SR(DF), OS-DY(DF) → Removed ZV Top CR
- ZV Top CR partially overlap with OS-Top CR (e μ) \rightarrow Removed ZV Top CR

Region	n. <i>ℓ</i>	ℓ/ au veto	SF	∑ charge	b-veto	m _{ll}	MET	n. AK4
SS-b	2	yes/yes	-	2	no	> 20 GeV	> 30 GeV	≥ 2
SS($ au$)-Top	2	yes/no	-	О	no	-	> 50 GeV	≥ 2
OS-Top(SF)	2	yes/-	yes	0	no	> 120 GeV	> 60 GeV	≥ 2
ZV-DY(btag)	2	yes/-	yes	o	no	€ [76, 106] GeV	-	(≥ 4) or $(\ge 2 + \ge 1$ AK8)
ZV-SR(btag)	2	yes/-	yes	О	no	€ [76, 106] GeV	-	(≥ 4) or $(\ge 2 + \ge 1$ AK8)
OS-Top(DF)	2	yes/-	no	0	no	> 50 GeV	> 20 GeV	≥ 2





Other regions



Other regions do not show significant overlaps

- WV CR only regions with 1 charged lepton and veto on additional ones
- SSWW/WZ ZZ CR not sensitive to EW ZZ \rightarrow 4 ℓ but used to measure normalization of QCD-induced part \rightarrow Removed ZZ CR

Region	n. <i>ℓ</i>	ℓ/ au veto	SF	∑ charge	b-veto	m _{ll}	MET	n. AK4
WV-Top	1	yes/-	-	1	no	-	-	(≥ 4) or $(\ge 2 + \ge 1$ AK8)
WV-Wjets	1	yes/-	-	1	yes	-	-	(≥ 4) or $(\ge 2 + \ge 1$ AK8)
ZZ-SR	4	yes/-	yes	0	-	€ [60, 120] GeV	1	≥ 2





Overlap (II)



Table 16: Summary table of the signal regions defined in the analyses entering the combination along with some of the selections that make them orthogonal to each other

					/			
Region	n. <i>l</i>	ℓ veto	SF	$ \sum charge $	b-veto	m_{ll}	MET	n. AK4
WV-Top	1	yes	-	1	no	-	-	$(\geq 4) \text{ or } (\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$
SS-b	2	yes	7	2	no	> 20 GeV	> 30 GeV	≥ 2
WZ-b	3	yes	yes (Z)	1	no	∈ [76,106] GeV	> 30 GeV	≥ 2
OS-Top(SF)	2	yes	yes	0	no	> 120 GeV	> 60 GeV	≥ 2
ZV-DY(btag)	2	yes	yes	0	no	∈ [76,106] GeV	-	$(\geq 4) \text{ or } (\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$
ZV-SR(btag)	2	yes	yes	0	no	∈ [76,106] GeV	-	$(\geq 4) \text{ or } (\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$
ZV-Top	2	yes	no	0	-	∈ [76,106] GeV	-	$(\geq 4) \text{ or } (\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$
OS-Top(DF)	2	yes	no	0	no	> 50 GeV	> 20 GeV	≥ 2

Table 17: Summary table of the signal regions defined in the analyses entering the combination along with some of the selections that make them orthogonal to each other

Region	n. <i>l</i>	ℓ veto	SF	∑charge	b-veto	m_{ll}	MET	n. AK4
WV-Wjets	1	yes	-	1	yes	-	-	$(\geq 4) \text{ or } (\geq 2 + \geq 1 \text{ AK8})$
ZZ-SR	4	yes	yes	0	-	∈ [60,120] GeV	-	≥ 2
SS-ZZ	4	yes	yes	0	-	∈ [76, 106] GeV	-	≥ 2





Correlation table (I)



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Correlation table (II)



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