Higgs total width at the ATLAS experiment



Rafael Coelho Lopes de Sá on behalf of the ATLAS Collaboration

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The Higgs boson

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The Higgs Boson was discovered in 2012 by ATLAS and CMS



Characterization of the Higgs boson properties



0 110

120

130

140

150

m₄₁ [GeV]

160

This talk will focus on results using the $H \rightarrow ZZ$ decay channel

The Higgs boson spin-parity



Spin-parity nature of the Higgs boson has been well established with Run 1 measurements



The $J^P = 0^+$ nature of the Higgs boson is greatly favored over other hypothesis with spin 2 or negative parity.

Spin 1 hypothesis excluded by the Landau-Yang theorem.

This result will be explored in the measurement presented today.

The Higgs mass

Increasingly precise measurement of the Higgs mass with Run 2 data



 $m_H = 124.99 \pm 0.18(\text{stat}) \pm 0.04(\text{syst}) \text{ GeV}$

ATLAS Collaboration, Submitted to PLB, arXiv:2207.00320



Systematic Uncertainty	Contribution [MeV]
Muon momentum scale	± 28
Electron energy scale	± 19
Signal-process theory	± 14



ATLAS Collaboration, MUON-2022-01

Measurement with very small systematic uncertainty. Excellent work from the object working groups.

The Higgs width





On-shell interference and Γ_H



In 2013, L. Dixon and Y. Li [3] pointed out there is a large interference between $H \rightarrow \gamma \gamma$ and the continuous $\gamma \gamma$ that can be used to probe the Higgs boson width Γ_H



The interference creates a shift in the $m_{\gamma\gamma}$ peak with respect to m_H .

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The shift can be used probe Γ_H experimentally by comparing the $m_{\gamma\gamma}$ and $m_{4\ell}$ peaks.

A short note describing an experimental implementation of the method was made public in 2016: ATLAS Collaboration, ATL-PHYS-PUB-2016-009

This method should be able to constrain $\Gamma_H / \Gamma_H^{SM} < O(100)$

Off-shell Higgs production and Γ_H

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In 2012, N. Kauer and G. Passarino [4] pointed out that, despite the small total width, the off-shell Higgs production cross section in $H \rightarrow VV$ is not small due threshold enhancements



Off-shell Higgs production and Γ_H



Phys. Lett. B 786 (2018) 223

[4] JHEP 08 (2012) 116
[5] Phys. Rev. D88 (2013) 054024
[6] JHEP 04 (2014) 60

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Nat. Phys. 18 (2022) 1329

Signal-background interference





In the off-shell region, the interference (I) between the two components S and B is large and destructive (to preserve unitarity at high energies).



ggF off-shell Higgs production

The Γ_H result presented today uses the measurement of the off-shell Higgs production with both $H \rightarrow ZZ \rightarrow 4\ell$ and $H \rightarrow ZZ \rightarrow 2\ell 2\nu$ decay channels

 $\sum_{g \neq Q} \prod_{i,b} \prod_{V} \prod_{V} \prod_{V} \prod_{V}$

 $N_{gg \to (H^*) \to ZZ}(\mu_{\text{off-shell}}) = (\mu_{\text{off-shell}} - \sqrt{\mu_{\text{off-shell}}})N_S + \sqrt{\mu_{\text{off-shell}}}N_{SBI} + (1 - \sqrt{\mu_{\text{off-shell}}})N_B$

The description is done as a function of S, SBI, and B because of the inefficiencies in generating interference-only MC samples. Modern developments motivated by VBF-type production have greatly improved the situation [7].



EW off-shell Higgs production





Non-negligible interference between all the components (VBF, t-channel, VH, VBS)

$$\mu_{\text{off-shell}} = \kappa_{V,\text{off-shell}}^4$$

EW samples are always produced as full process (SBI^{EW}), including regions with $m_{4\ell} \simeq 125$ GeV (t-channel Higgs process renders separation impossible).

$$N_{EW}(\mu_{off-shell}) = \begin{bmatrix} \mu_{off-shell} \\ \sqrt{\mu_{off-shell}} \end{bmatrix}^{T} \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 10 & \sqrt{10} & 1 \end{bmatrix}^{-1} \begin{bmatrix} SBI_{0}^{EW} \\ SBI_{1}^{EW} \\ SBI_{10}^{EW} \end{bmatrix}$$

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Three different values of $\mu_{\text{off-shell}}$ are used (0,1,10)

Off-shell Higgs and global fits



ATLAS Collaboration, Nature 607, pages 52-59 (2022)

$$\Gamma_H = \Gamma_H^{\rm SM} \frac{\sum_j B_j^{\rm SM} \kappa_j^2}{(1 - B_i - B_u)}$$

 B_u (undetected decays of the Higgs boson) scales all observed cross section and we only measure ratios in the LHC.

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Constraint on B_u are obtained by requiring $\kappa_V \leq 1$.

Including off-shell Higgs measurement, limits can be obtained without these hypotheses since off-shell production does not depend on Γ_H

Off-shell Higgs and global fits



Parameter value

 $\Gamma_H = \Gamma_H^{\rm SM} \frac{\sum_j B_j^{\rm SM} \kappa_j^2}{(1 - B_i - B_u)}$

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The two hypotheses were used in the global fits performed with Run 1 data.

ATLAS Collaboration, Eur. Phys. J. C (2016) 76

Off-shell Higgs and EFT



[8] JETP Vol. 147 (3) (2015)[9] JHEP 1609 (2016) 123

Off-shell Higgs production can be used to probe EFT operators, in both signal and background diagrams.

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- Processes probing higher energy scale $m_{ZZ} > m_H$.
- But low number of events because of reduced cross section.

As noted by A. Azatov, C. Grojean, A. Paul, and E. Salvioni [8] in 2015, off-shell production can break the degeneracy between operators that are indistinguishable with on-shell production



This degeneracy can also be broken by $t\bar{t}H$ and boosted Higgs production, as noted by the same authors in [9].

Off-shell Higgs and new light states

ATLAS EXPERIMENT

- The Higgs width interpretation relies on the assumption that the relationship between the Higgs onshell and off-shell couplings is given by the SM evolution.
- New BSM light states could break this hypothesis.
- However, new light states would also create new mass thresholds that can be probed with off-shell production.
- In 2018, D. Gonçalves, T. Han, and S. Mukhopadhyay [10] pointed out that off-shell Higgs production can be used to probe light, weakly-coupled BSM particles through new mass thresholds. Interesting searches for HL-LHC.



Run 2 ATLAS detector

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The results presented today use the full Run 2 dataset (139 fb⁻¹) in both $ZZ \rightarrow 4\ell$ and $ZZ \rightarrow 2\ell 2\nu$ decay channels. They supersede the previous 36 fb⁻¹ result.

 4ℓ channel \rightarrow single, double, and triple lepton trigger $2\ell 2\nu$ channel \rightarrow single lepton trigger



Event selection

4ℓ channel

 $ZZ \rightarrow 4\ell$ selection

2 same-flavor, opposite-charge lepton pairs Leading $p_T^{\text{lep}} > 20, 15, 10 \text{ GeV}$ $220 \le m_{4\ell} \le 2000 \text{ GeV}$ $180 \le m_{4\ell} \le 220 \text{ GeV} (\text{for CRs})$

$2\ell 2\nu$ channel

 $ZZ \rightarrow 2\ell 2\nu$ selection

1 same-flavor, opposite-charge lepton pair Leading $p_T^{\text{lep}} > 30,20 \text{ GeV}$ $76 < m_{\ell\ell} < 106 \text{ GeV}$ $E_T^{\text{miss}} > 120 \text{ GeV}$ Pair 12 defined as the pair with $m_{\ell\ell}$ closest to m_Z

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$$50 \le m_{12} \le 106 \text{ GeV}$$

$$50 - \max(0, \frac{190 - m_{4\ell}}{2}) \le m_{34} \le 115 \text{ GeV}$$

background rejection cuts

 $3^{\rm rd}$ lepton veto $\Delta R_{\ell\ell} < 1.8$ $\Delta \phi(Z, E_T^{\rm miss}) > 2.5$ $\Delta \phi (\text{jet } p_T > 100 \text{ GeV}, E_T^{\text{miss}}) > 0.4$ $E_T^{\text{miss}} \text{ significance} > 10$ *b*-jet veto

Inclusive distributions







Event categorization



Jets are selected with $p_T > 30$ GeV and $|\eta| < 4.5$



1 jet mixed signal region



 $n_{
m jets} = 1$ and $|\eta_j| \ge 2.2$

EW signal region



 $n_{
m jets} \geq 2$ and $|\Delta \eta_{jj}| \geq 4.0$

Fractions in 4ℓ channel







Event categorization



Jets are selected with $p_T > 30$ GeV and $|\eta| < 4.5$





 $n_{
m jets} = 1$ and $|\eta_j| \ge 2.2$



 $n_{
m jets} \ge 2$ and $\Delta \eta_{jj} \! \ge \! 4.0$

Fractions in $2\ell 2\nu$ channel







Observable in the 4ℓ channel

- Previous versions of this analysis used analytical matrix element discriminants calculated without transfer functions, without PDFs, and with a rough approximation of the initial-state kinematics.
- This analysis uses a neural network version of the discriminant trained with reconstructed variables and the best higher-order MC simulations available for each process.



NN largely explores the $J_P = 0^+$ nature of the Higgs boson

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 $O_{\rm NN}^{\rm ggF}$ also used for mixed region

Interference cannot be directly included as a category in the NN since it has no probabilistic interpretation (negative weights, not a probability).

Observable in the 4 ℓ channel



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Events

Observable in the $2\ell 2\nu$ channel

Events



- The purity of off-shell Higgs production increases with m_{ZZ}
- The transverse mass is used as a proxy for the mass in the presence of neutrinos in the final state

$$(m_T^{ZZ})^2 = \left[\sqrt{m_Z^2 + \left(p_T^{\ell\ell}\right)^2} + \sqrt{m_Z^2 + \left(E_T^{\text{miss}}\right)^2}\right]^2 - \left|p_T^{\ell\ell} + \overline{E_T^{\text{miss}}}\right|^2$$



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Observable in the $2\ell 2\nu$ channel



- The purity of off-shell Higgs production increases with m_{ZZ}
- The transverse mass is used as a proxy for the mass in the presence of neutrinos in the final state

$$(m_T^{ZZ})^2 = \left[\sqrt{m_Z^2 + \left(p_T^{\ell\ell}\right)^2} + \sqrt{m_Z^2 + \left(E_T^{\text{miss}}\right)^2}\right]^2 - \left|p_T^{\ell\ell} + \overline{E_T^{\text{miss}}}\right|^2$$



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Signal and background modeling



The distribution of the observables in each channel is obtained from MC simulations

Process	MC generator	Description
ggF S, B, SBI	Sherpa v2.2.2	0+1 jets @ LO
EW SBI0, SBI1, SBI10	Madgraph5	LO
$q \overline{q} Z Z$	Sherpa v2.2.2	0+1 jets @ NLO, 2+3 jets @ LO
WZ	Sherpa v2.2.1	0+1 jets @ NLO, 2+3 jets @ LO

*subleading processes not included here

EW NLO corrections for $q\bar{q}ZZ$ calculated by S. Kallweit et al [11] are applied.

[11] JHEP 11 (2017) 120
[12] JHEP 07 (2016) 087
[13] Eur. Phys. J. C 74 (2014) 2866



Caola et al. *JHEP* 07 (2016) 087

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ggF S, B, and SBI are scaled to NLO using the calculation by F. Caola et al. from 2016 [12]. An additional factor of 1.2×1.1 is used to approximate NNLO [13] and N³LO corrections.

Background normalization



The normalizations of the main background sources are determined by data

- 4 ℓ and 2 ℓ 2 ν channels: $\mu(q\bar{q}ZZ)$
- $2\ell 2\nu$ channel: $\mu(WZ)$, $\mu(Z + \text{jets})$, and non-resonant $\ell\ell \mu(e\mu)$ production (mostly $t\bar{t}$ and WW)

The ratios of observed yields in jet bins

 $\frac{\mu(q\bar{q}ZZ+1jet)}{\mu(q\bar{q}ZZ)}, \frac{\mu(q\bar{q}ZZ+(2+)jet)}{\mu(q\bar{q}ZZ)}, \frac{\mu(WZ+1jet)}{\mu(WZ)}, \frac{\mu(WZ+(2+)jet)}{\mu(WZ)}$

are also determined by data to improve the background description in the jet-binned signal regions.

Dedicated control regions are introduced to constrain each of the data-driven normalization factors.

Control regions

- Three $q\bar{q} \rightarrow ZZ$ control regions are defined in 4ℓ final state $180 \le m_{4\ell} \le 220 \text{ GeV}$ $n_{\text{iets}} = 0, 1, \ge 2$
- Several control regions targeting $2\ell 2\nu$ backgrounds. Selections based on the $2\ell 2\nu$ event selection



10 4-lepton production, CMS cuts, √s=13 TeV 10 → 4leptons 4leptons(cont) 10-'dm₄[fb/GeV] 10-10 10-6 10-7 100 200 2000 500 1000 m4[GeV]

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One control region per floating normalization

Modeling uncertainties

- Scale variation in the NLO/LO k-factor are used as missing higher-order uncertainties for ggF S, SBI, and B processes.
- Additional higher-order uncertainties estimated by varying Sherpa **resummation** and **matching** scales in both $q\bar{q} \rightarrow ZZ$ and ggF processes.
- Higher-order QCD uncertainties in $q\bar{q} \rightarrow ZZ$ estimated by **renormalization** and **factorization** scale variations.
- EW NLO uncertainties in qq̄ → ZZ estimated with MATRIX (by M. Grazzini et al [14]) based on the difference between the multiplicative and additive schemes QCD + EW NLO corrections.
- Uncertainties on EW SBI processes are modeled through **renormalization** and **factorization** scale variations, and Pythia shower variations.



180 200 220

240 260

 $m_{4\ell}$ [GeV]

280 300 320

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Caola et al. JHEP 07 (2016) 087

• Simultaneous fit in the six signal regions (4 ℓ and 2 ℓ 2 ν channels) and eight control regions.



+ 8 control regions

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Correlated experimental and modeling uncertainties.

Normalization factor	Fitted value
$\mu_{ m qqZZ}$	1.11 ± 0.07
$\mu^{1j}_{ m qqZZ}$	0.90 ± 0.10
$\mu^{2j}_{ m qqZZ}$	0.88 ± 0.26
$\mu_{3\ell}$	1.06 ± 0.03
$\mu^{1j}_{3\ell}$	0.92 ± 0.10
$\mu^{2j}_{3\ell}$	0.75 ± 0.19
$\mu_{ m Zj}$	0.90 ± 0.19
$\mu_{e\mu}$	1.08 ± 0.09



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 $\mu_{\text{off-shell}} = \kappa_{g,\text{off-shell}}^2 \kappa_{V,\text{off-shell}}^2 = \kappa_{V,\text{off-shell}}^4$

The interference creates the unorthodox shape of the test statistics $-2\ln(\lambda)$

Expected uncertainty on the signal strength does not scale with \sqrt{L}

> Asymptotic approximation, valid within 5-10%.





 $\mu_{\text{off-shell}}^{\text{ggF}} = \kappa_{g,\text{off-shell}}^2 \kappa_{V,\text{off-shell}}^2$ $\mu_{\text{off-shell}}^{\text{EW}} = \kappa_{V,\text{off-shell}}^4$

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The interference creates the unorthodox shape of the test statistics $-2\ln(\lambda)$

Expected uncertainty on the signal strength does not scale with \sqrt{L}

Impact of systematic uncertainties



Measurement of $\mu_{off-shell}$ is not a measurement of a yield. Interference gives rise to two different values of $\mu_{off-shell}$ for a given yield.

There are yields for which there are no solutions (not considering nuisance parameters)



Systematic Uncertainties	$-2\ln\lambda(\mu_{\text{off-shell}}) = 4 \text{ crossing}$
Parton shower uncertainty for $ggZZ$ (normalisation)	2.26
Parton shower uncertainty for $ggZZ$ (shape)	2.29
NLO EW uncertainty for $qqZZ$	2.27
NLO QCD uncertainty for $ggZZ$	2.29
Parton shower uncertainty for $qqZZ$ (shape)	2.29
Jet energy scale and resolution uncertainty	2.26
All uncertainties	2.30

Double solution for $\mu_{\text{off-shell}}$ also makes the definition of systematic uncertainty impact via finite differences $\hat{\mu}(\hat{\alpha} + \delta \alpha) - \hat{\mu}(\hat{\alpha})$ unreliable.

Impact of systematics uncertainties given instead by the change in $-2\ln(\lambda) = 4$ crossing when the given uncertainty source is removed.

Comparison with previous result

xpected-Stat. only

2σ

5

 $\mu_{\text{off-shell}}$

Expected

Observed

Δ

3

2

····· Observed-Stat. only



New in this preliminary result

2In(\lambda)

10

8

6

n

14 ATLAS

12-13 TeV, 36.1 fb⁻¹

 $H^* \rightarrow ZZ \rightarrow 41,212v$

 $\mu_{\text{off-shell}}^{gg \rightarrow H^* \rightarrow ZZ} / \mu_{\text{off-shell}}^{\text{VBF } H^* \rightarrow ZZ} = 1$

 $36 \, {\rm fb}^{-1}$

- Increased integrated luminosity
- Optimized discriminant in the 4ℓ channel
- Improved description of modeling systematics

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Separate results for ggF and EW production

On-shell measurement results



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This is the on-shell only result. $\mu_{on-shell}$ is always floating when the on-shell / off-shell ratios are determined.

Off-shell/on-shell couplings

Joint off-shell $(4\ell + 2\ell 2\nu \text{ channel})$ and on-shell $(4\ell \text{ channel only})$ analysis



36

2σ

1σ

4.5 5

 $\mathsf{R}_{\mathsf{V}\mathsf{V}}$

4



Measurement of Γ_H

- Measured ratio $\Gamma_H / \Gamma_H^{\text{SM}} = 1.11^{+0.63}_{-0.60}$
- This corresponds to a measurement of the total Higgs boson width of

 $\Gamma_H = 4.6^{+2.6}_{-2.5} \text{ MeV} @ 68\% \text{ CL}.$

• Uncertainty quoted using asymptotic approximation.



Conclusions

- We presented a new measurement of the Higgs boson total width.
- The Higgs boson total width is probed via the measurement of the off-shell Higgs production in the $H \rightarrow ZZ \rightarrow 4\ell$ and $H \rightarrow ZZ \rightarrow 2\ell 2\nu$ channels.
- We have evidence for the off-shell production of Higgs bosons. The background-only hypothesis is rejected at an observed significance of 3.2σ (2.4 σ expected).
- The measurement of the Higgs total width is

 $\Gamma_H = 4.6^{+2.6}_{-2.5}$ MeV @ 68% CL. (4.1^{+3.2}_{-3.5} MeV expected)

- Consistent with the recent CMS result $\Gamma_H = 3.2^{+2.4}_{-1.7}$ MeV $(4.1^{+4.0}_{-3.5}$ MeV expected) [15], which uses 140 fb⁻¹ 4 ℓ on-shell + 78 fb⁻¹ 4 ℓ off-shell + 138 fb⁻¹ 2 ℓ 2 ν off-shell.
- Several new ideas can be explored with the off-shell Higgs measurement, including searches for new heavy and light BSM states.
- This is a preliminary result. Final results and new interpretations will be provided soon.