



Probing the nature of electroweak symmetry breaking with Higgs boson pairs in ATLAS

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on behalf of the ATLAS Collaboration

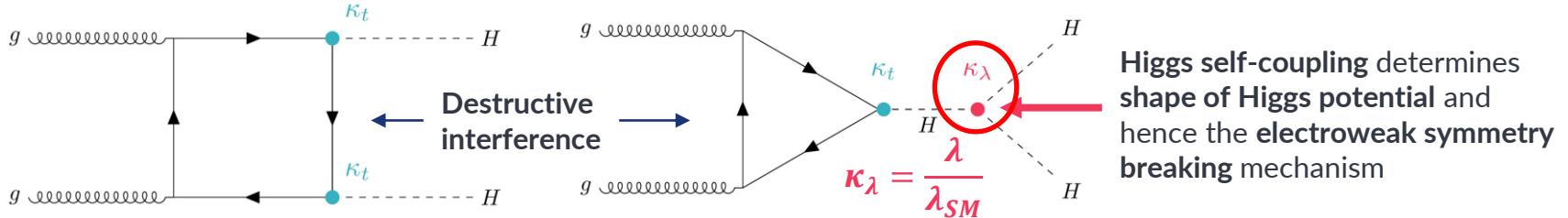
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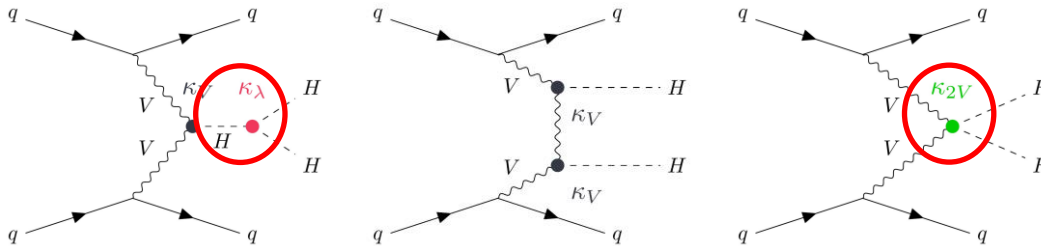


Higgs pair production at the LHC

- Rare event: $\sim 10^3$ times smaller Standard Model (SM) cross-section than single Higgs; expect only ~ 4600 events in whole ATLAS Run-2 dataset
- Dominant SM process: **gluon-gluon fusion (ggF)**, with cross-section 31.05 fb



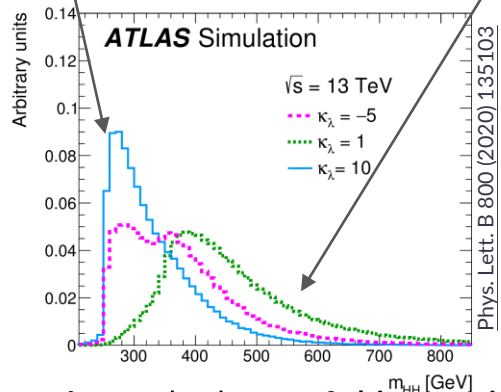
- SM process with second-highest cross-section: **vector boson fusion (VBF)**, 1.73 fb



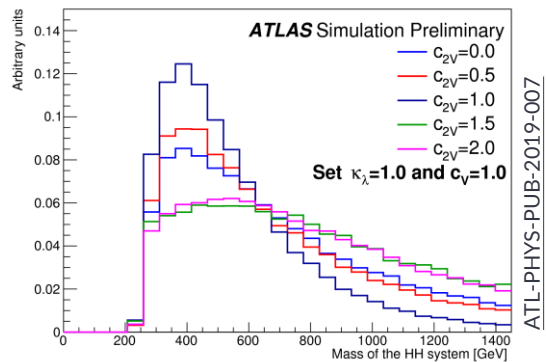
- ATLAS di-Higgs (HH) searches set constraints on both κ_λ and κ_{2V} coupling modifiers

Physics beyond the Standard Model in HH production

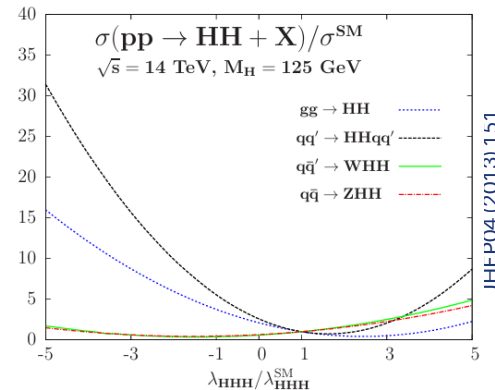
- Modification of κ_λ results in large variation in production cross-section
- Di-Higgs invariant mass m_{HH} distribution strongly depends on κ_λ and κ_{2V}



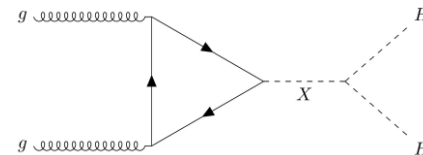
- Large $|\kappa_\lambda| \rightarrow$ soft kinematics, difficult to detect



- Large $|\kappa_{2V}| \rightarrow$ hard kinematics



- BSM resonances decaying to HH would enhance production rate and modify kinematics



See talks by [Tong Qiu](#) and [Weitao Wang](#)

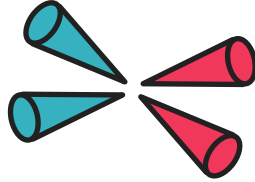
HH decay channels and ATLAS searches

	bb	WW	$\tau\tau$	ZZ	$\gamma\gamma$
bb	34%				
WW	25%	4.6%			
$\tau\tau$	7.3%	2.7%	0.39%		
ZZ	3.1%	1.1%	0.33%	0.069%	
$\gamma\gamma$	0.26%	0.10%	0.028%	0.012%	0.0005%

- ATLAS searches cover >50% of HH decays
- Presented here the latest **nonresonant** searches with **full Run-2** data at 13 TeV, their **combination** and **prospects for the High-Luminosity LHC**

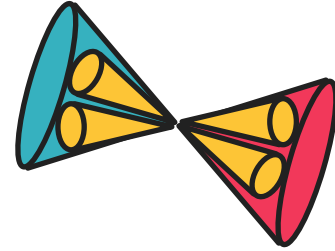
- $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ (34%) – most abundant, but challenging multijet background
- $b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$ (0.26%) – low branching ratio, but clean final state, excellent $m_{\gamma\gamma}$ resolution
- $b\bar{b}\tau^-\tau^+$ (7.3%) – in between in terms of signal vs background trade-off, dedicated search requires at least one hadronic τ decay
- $b\bar{b}\ell^-\ell^+$ + missing E_T (2.9%) – targeting events where one $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$
- **Multilepton** (6.5%) – targeting $b\bar{b}ZZ(\rightarrow 4\ell)$ and states where both $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ (9 subchannels)

Nonresonant $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$



Resolved (Phys. Rev. D 108 (2023) 052003)

- b -jet trigger
- ≥ 4 b -jets with $p_T > 40$ GeV, $|\eta| < 2.5$
 - VBF: ≥ 6 jets, $m_{jj} > 1$ TeV, $|\Delta\eta_{jj}| > 3$
 - ggF: $|\Delta\eta_{HH}| < 1.5$ Not b-tagged
- Jet pairing minimises angular separation in the higher- p_T Higgs candidate
- Top veto discriminant
- Signal region:
 - $X_{HH} = \sqrt{\left(\frac{m_{H1}-124 \text{ GeV}}{0.1m_{H1}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{m_{H2}-117 \text{ GeV}}{0.1m_{H2}}\right)^2} < 1.6$
 - Split into X_{HH} and $|\Delta\eta_{HH}|$ categories to enhance sensitivity



Boosted (arXiv:2404.17193)

- Large-radius jet trigger
- ≥ 2 double- b -tagged jets
- $p_T > 450$ GeV for leading, 250 GeV sub-leading Higgs candidate
- $m_{jj} > 1$ TeV, $|\Delta\eta_{jj}| > 3$ for VBF jets
- Only considers VBF topology (relatively high sensitivity)
- Signal region:

$$\sqrt{\left(\frac{m_{H1}-124 \text{ GeV}}{1500 \text{ GeV}/m_{H1}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{m_{H2}-117 \text{ GeV}}{1900 \text{ GeV}/m_{H2}}\right)^2} < 1.6 \text{ GeV}$$

Nonresonant $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ background estimation

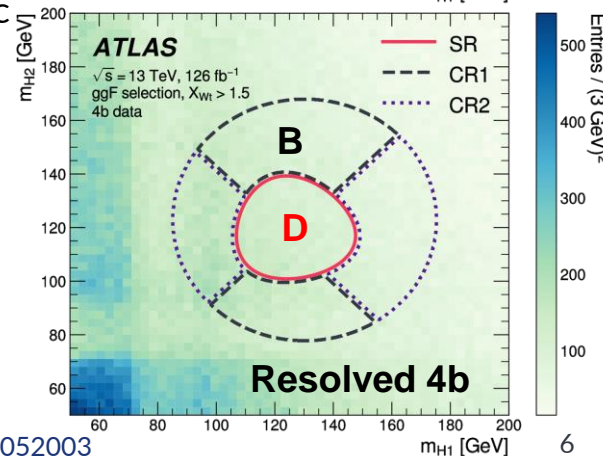
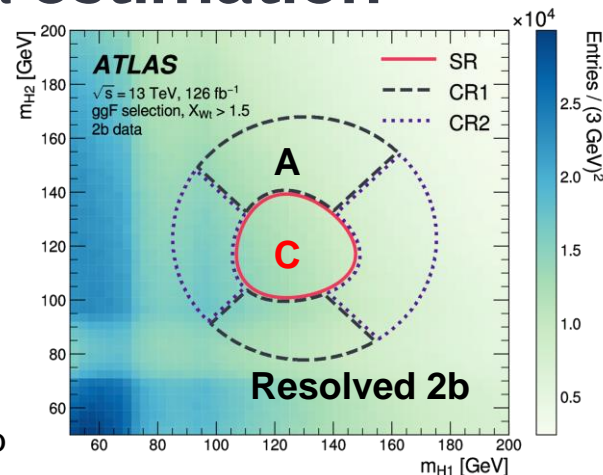
- Dominant background: QCD multijet
- Difficult to model \rightarrow fully data-driven estimate
- Uses alternative event samples with same selection as signal, but fewer b -tagged jets to derive 4b background

Control region (sideband) Signal region (Higgs mass)



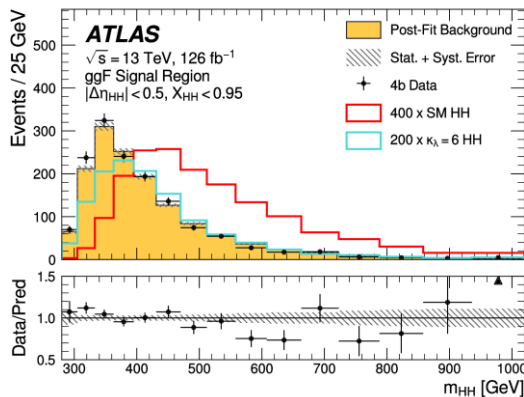
2 control regions to estimate systematic uncertainty

- Boosted analysis derives normalisation factor, while resolved uses neural network to assign weight to each 2b event

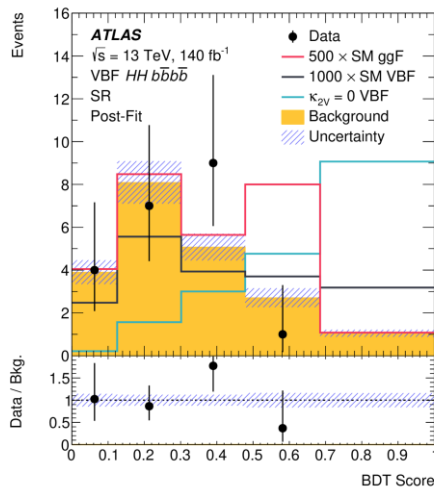


Nonresonant $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ results

- Discriminating variable fitted is m_{HH} for resolved and boosted decision tree (BDT) score for boosted

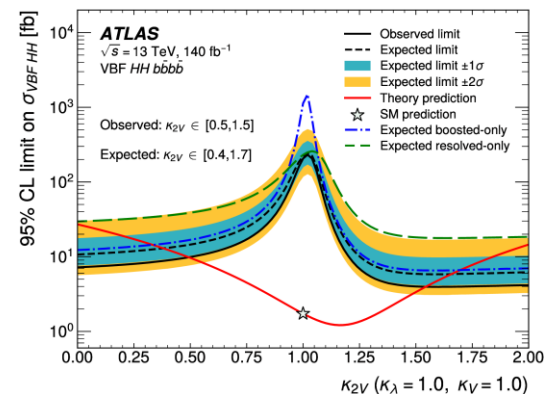
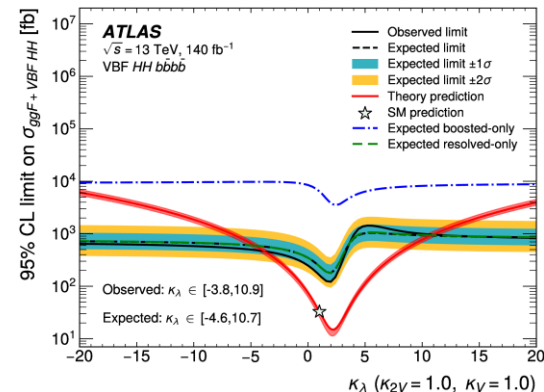


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arXiv:2404.17193

- 95% CL upper limit on cross-section : 5.4 times SM value (8.1 expected)
- $-3 < \kappa_\lambda < 11, 0.55 < \kappa_{2V} < 1.49$ - leading channel
- Dominant uncertainties: double b -tagging algorithm, background estimation, theoretical signal cross-section calculation

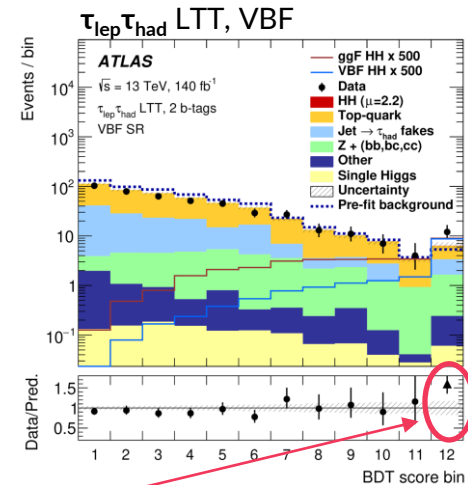
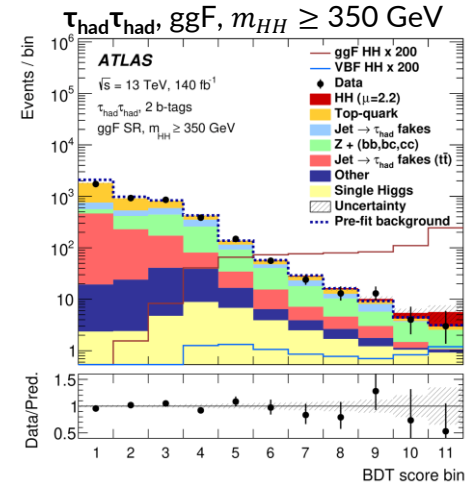


arXiv:2404.17193

Nonresonant $b\bar{b}\tau^-\tau^+$ analysis

[arXiv:2404.12660](https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.12660)

- 2 b -jets and 2 τ candidates with $m_{\tau\tau} > 60$ GeV, categorised by τ decay:
 - $\tau_{\text{had}}\tau_{\text{had}}$ channel: 2 oppositely charged hadronically decaying τ , e/μ veto
 - $\tau_{\text{lep}}\tau_{\text{had}}$ channel: 1 e/μ + 1 τ_{had} , separated into categories based on trigger – **single-lepton (SLT)** and **lepton + τ_{had} (LTT)**
- VBF events selected by BDT from events with 2 b -jets + ≥ 2 additional jets, otherwise considered as ggF
- ggF separated into $m_{HH} < 350$ GeV and $m_{HH} \geq 350$ GeV
- (VBF + 2 \times ggF) \times 3 triggers = **9 categories**; BDT discriminant trained in each
 - Trained on $\kappa_\lambda = 10$ in ggF $m_{HH} < 350$ GeV category, $\kappa_\lambda = 1$ in others
- Dominant background different in each category, but involves:
 - Fake τ from $t\bar{t}$ or multijets – estimated using data driven methods, deriving fake factors or scale factors from control regions
 - Top quark (true τ), $Z \rightarrow \tau\tau$ + heavy flavour, single-Higgs and others – shape from Monte Carlo, normalisation from fit or control region

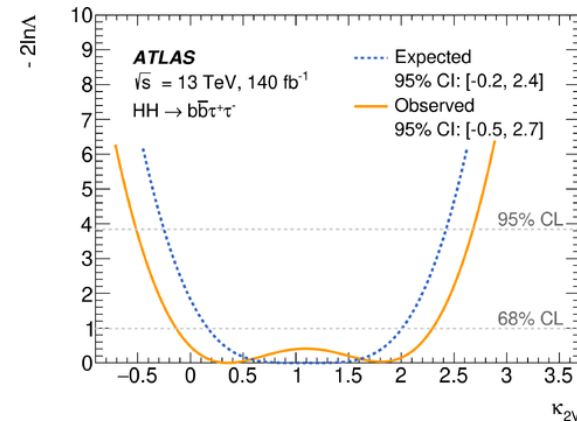
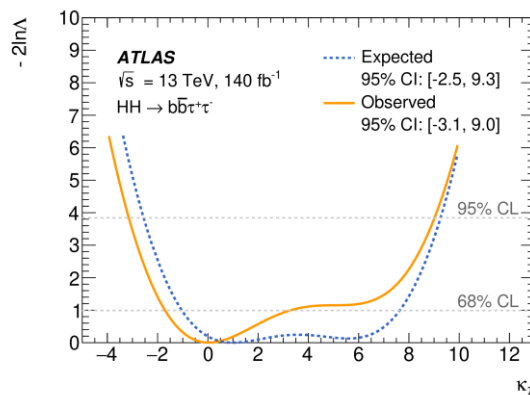
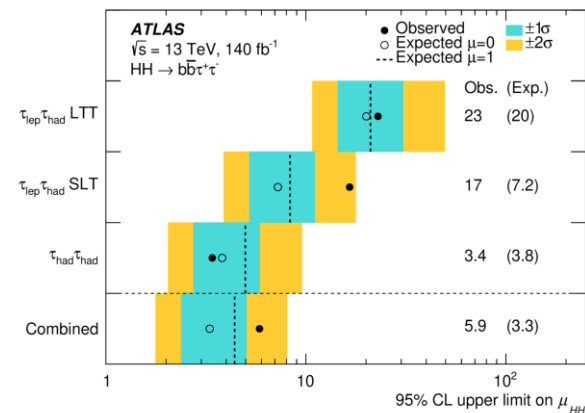


upward fluctuation

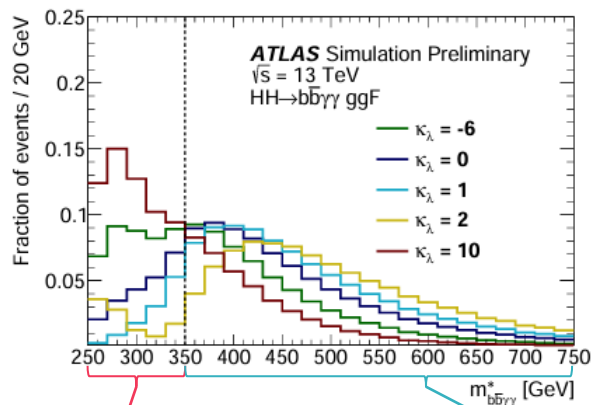
Nonresonant $b\bar{b}\tau^-\tau^+$ results

arXiv:2404.12660

- At 95% confidence level:
 - $\mu_{HH} < 5.9$ (3.3 expected assuming no HH - leading channel)
 - $-3.1 < \kappa_\lambda < 9.0$
 - $-0.5 < \kappa_{2V} < 2.7$
- Sensitivity improved by up to 20% compared to previous full Run-2 result
- Dominant uncertainties:
 - Data statistics
 - Modelling uncertainties:
 - top-quark background
 - single-Higgs background

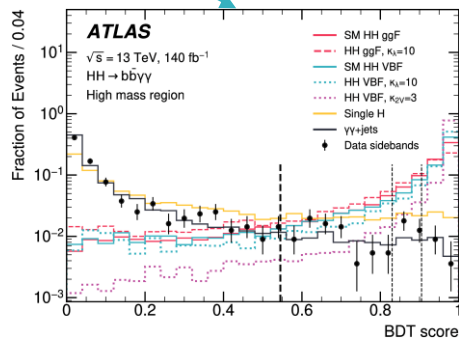
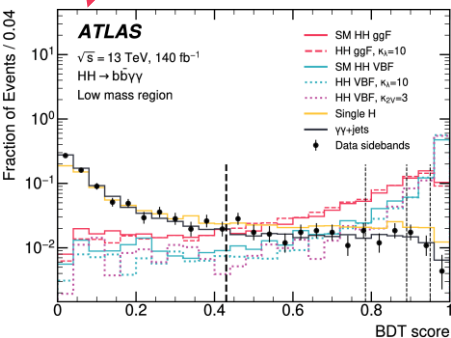


Nonresonant $b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$ analysis



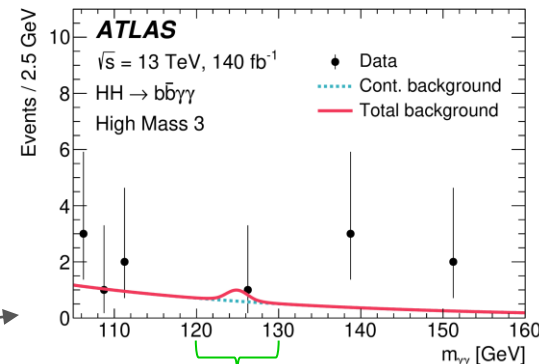
Low mass - targets BSM κ_λ
4 BDT score categories

- 2 b -jets and 2 photons with $105 < m_{\gamma\gamma} < 160$ GeV
- $t\bar{t}$ and $t\bar{t}H$ suppression: e/μ veto and < 6 central jets
- Divide into categories by $m_{b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma}^*$ and BDT discriminant score
 - $m_{b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma}^* = m_{b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma} + (125 \text{ GeV} - m_{b\bar{b}}) + (125 \text{ GeV} - m_{\gamma\gamma})$
- Fit $m_{\gamma\gamma}$ in each of 7 categories
 - $\gamma\gamma$ -continuum background modelled by exponential fit in sidebands
 - single-Higgs background modelled by Crystal Ball function fit to MC



High mass sensitive to SM and BSM $\kappa_{2\gamma}$

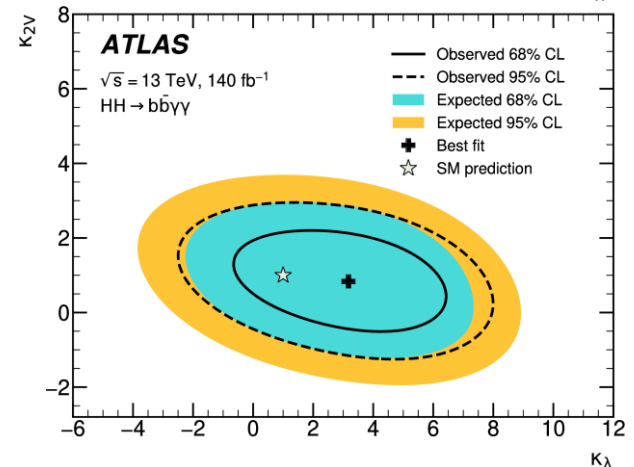
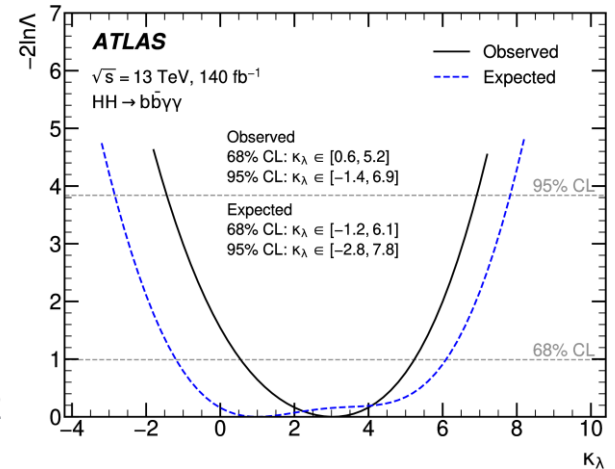
3 BDT score categories



Signal region

Nonresonant $b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$ results

- At 95% confidence level:
 - $\mu_{HH} < 4.0$ (5.0 expected assuming no HH)
 - $-1.4 < \kappa_\lambda < 6.9$ – leading channel
 - $-0.5 < \kappa_{2V} < 2.7$
- Sensitivity improved by up to 17% compared to previous full Run-2 result
- Dominant uncertainties:
 - Data statistics
 - Theory uncertainties on HH production cross-section



Nonresonant $b\bar{b}\ell\ell$ + missing E_T (neutrinos)

JHEP 02 (2024) 037

- Targeting one Higgs decay to $b\bar{b}$ and the other to W^+W^- , $\tau^+\tau^-$ or $ZZ \rightarrow 2$ light oppositely charged leptons (can have different flavour) and 2 b -jets

- ≥ 2 VBF jets with $p_T > 30$ GeV, $\max(\Delta\eta_{jj}) > 4$, $\max(m_{jj}) > 600$ GeV

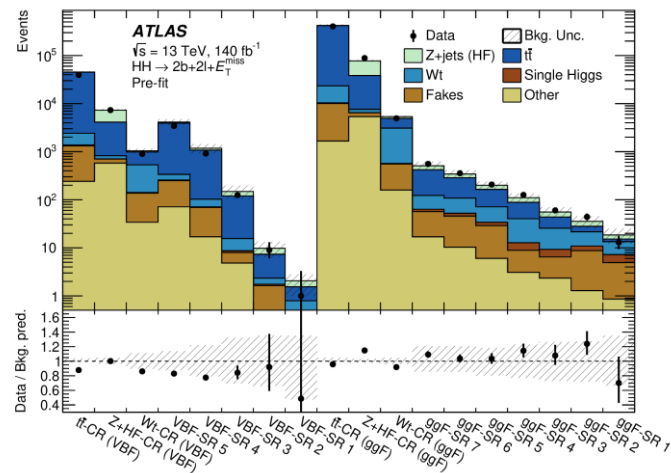
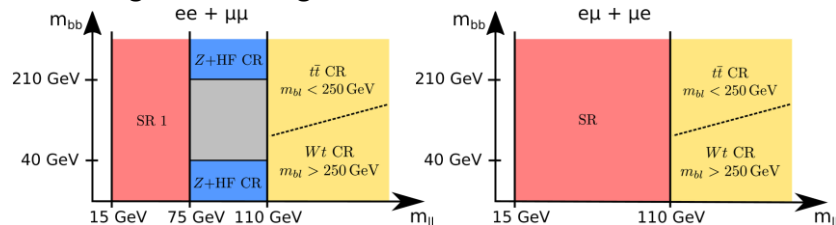
Yes - VBF

No - ggF

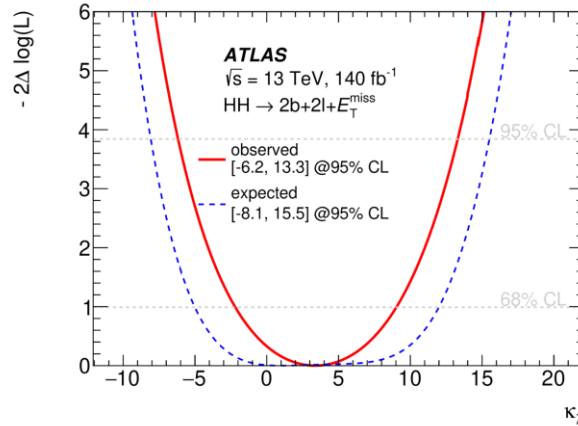
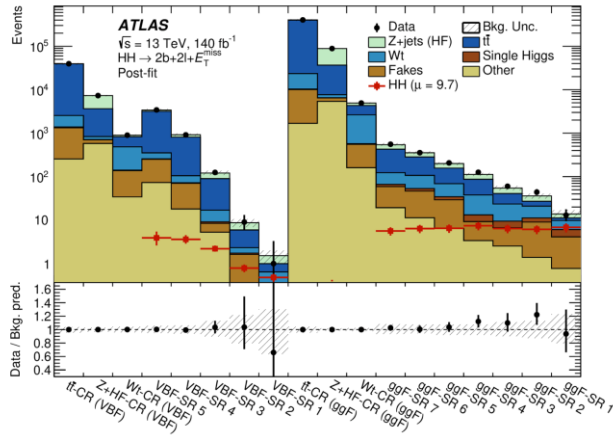
- Train BDT with $\kappa_\lambda = 0$ signal, background ggF HH and other SM
- Fit 5 most significant bins
- Dominant backgrounds:
 - Fake leptons - data-driven background estimate
 - Z + heavy flavour, $t\bar{t}$ and tW - shape from MC, normalisation from control regions
 - Single Higgs - estimated from MC

- Train neural network with ggF HH signal, $t\bar{t}$ and tW and other background
- Fit 7 most significant bins

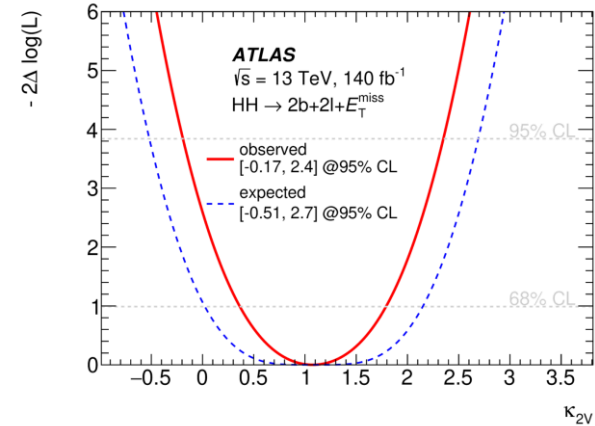
Categories and regions:



Nonresonant $b\bar{b}\ell\ell$ + missing E_T results



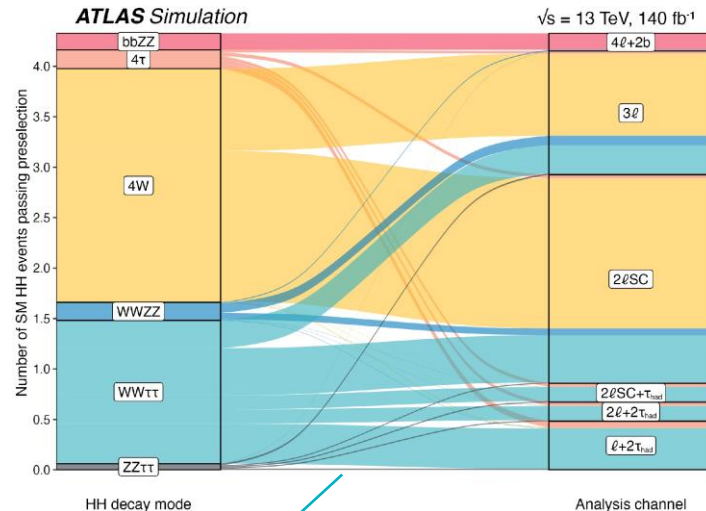
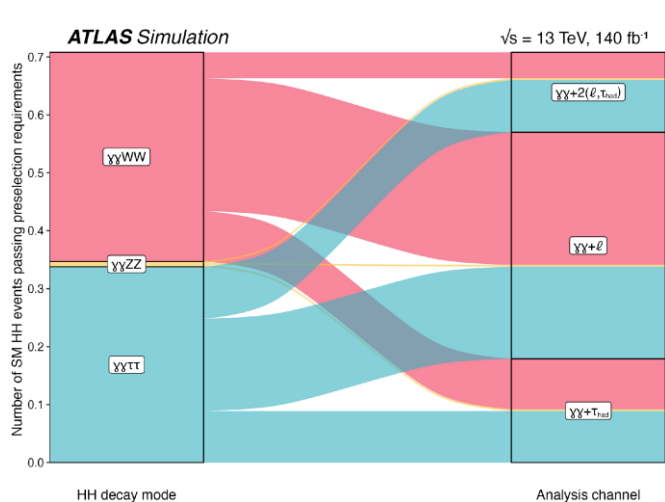
[JHEP 02 \(2024\) 037](#)



- At 95% confidence level:
 - $\mu_{HH} < 9.7$ (16.2 expected assuming no HH)
 - $-6.2 < \kappa_\lambda < 13.3$
 - $-0.17 < \kappa_{2V} < 2.4$
- Sensitivity improved by **factor of 2** compared to previous full Run-2 result

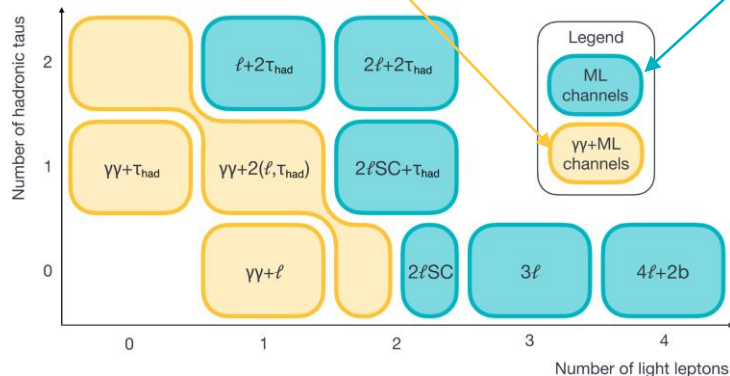
- Dominant uncertainties:
 - Data statistics
 - Modelling of Z + jets background

Nonresonant multilepton event selection



- 9 channels for the different HH decays:

- $4V$
- $VV\tau\tau$
- 4τ
- $b\bar{b}ZZ$
- $\gamma\gamma WW$
- $\gamma\gamma\tau\tau$
- $V = W, Z$



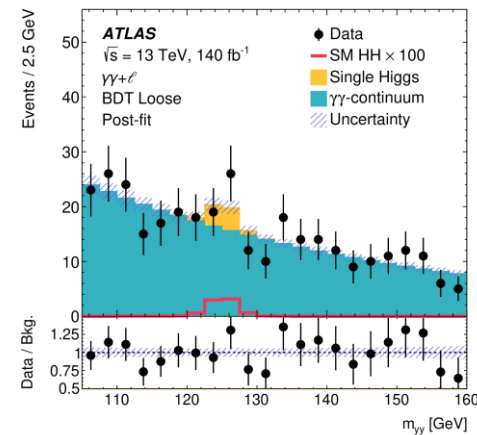
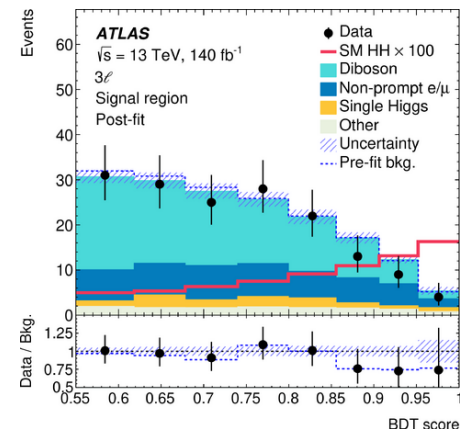
- Triggers:

- single lepton
- dilepton
- diphoton

arXiv:2405.20040

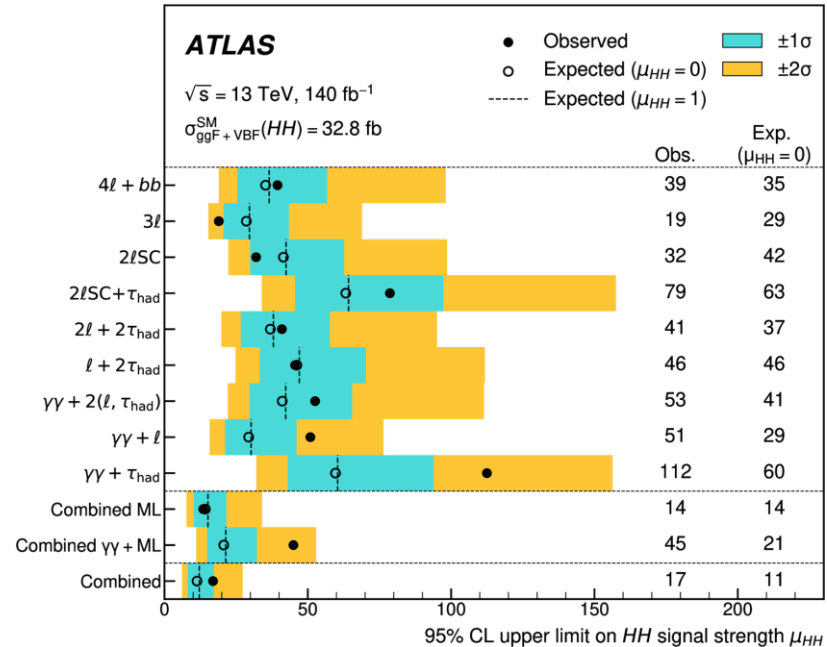
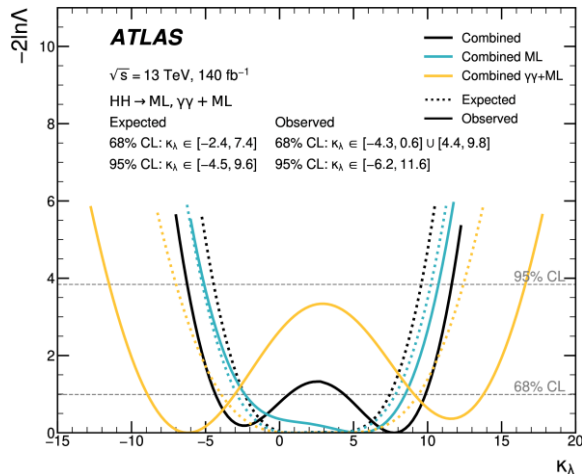
Nonresonant multilepton analysis strategy

- Backgrounds:
 - Leptons - fake or scale factors derived in dedicated control regions or simultaneous fit with signal regions:
 - Prompt leptons from SM processes (dominated by diboson)
 - Non-prompt leptons (photon conversion, hadron decay)
 - Misassigned charge (bremsstrahlung + conversion, mismeasured track curvature)
 - Misidentified τ
 - Photons - nonresonant $\gamma\gamma$ production – estimated by fitting exponential to diphoton invariant mass $m_{\gamma\gamma}$ in sidebands
- BDT trained in each sub-channel:
 - used as discriminant in multilepton channels
 - used to define categories in which $m_{\gamma\gamma}$ is fit in $\gamma\gamma$ + multilepton channels



Nonresonant multilepton results

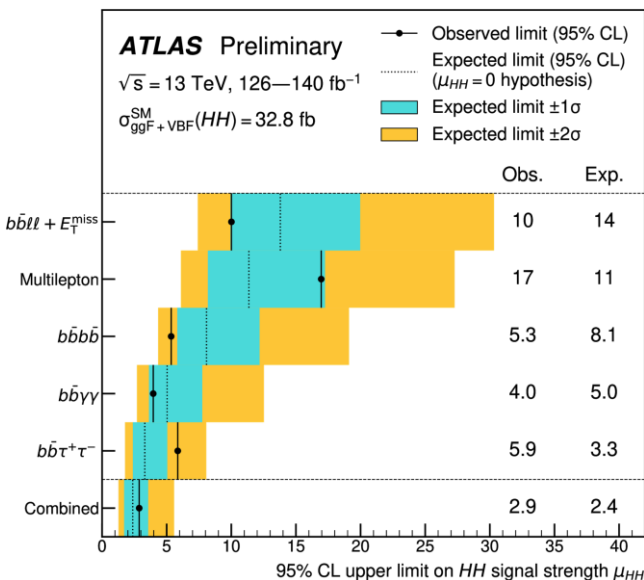
- At 95% confidence level:
 - $\mu_{HH} < 17$ (11 expected assuming no HH)
 - $-6.2 < \kappa_\lambda < 11.6$
 - $-2.5 < \kappa_{2V} < 4.6$
- Dominant uncertainty: data statistics
- 6 new sub-channels



- Sensitivity improved by factor 4-9 in channels that were used in previous analysis
 - mainly due to use of multivariate analysis (BDT discriminant)

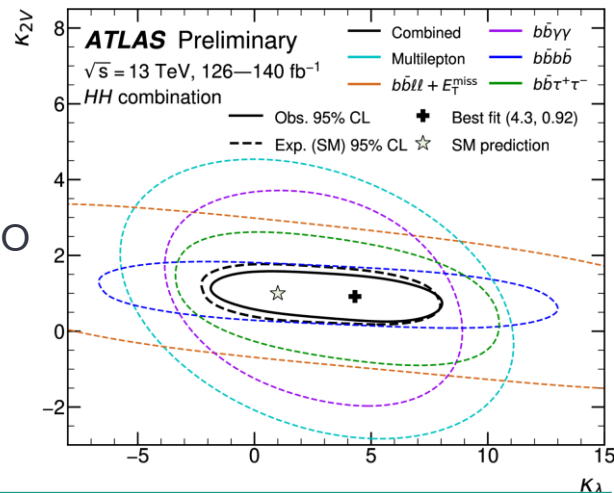
Combination

- Systematic uncertainties correlated where possible
- Higgs self-coupling contributes to single Higgs production through NLO corrections
- Observed (expected from SM) 95% CL constraints:



Best expected sensitivity to date (from any experiment)

	5 updated HH channels NEW! (ATLAS-CONF-2024-006)	$H + (HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}, b\bar{b}\tau^+\tau^-, b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma)$ Previous round (Phys. Lett. B, 843 (2023))
μ_{HH}	2.9 observed 2.4 expected	2.4 observed 2.9 expected
κ_λ	[-1.2, 7.2] observed [-1.6, 7.2] expected	[-0.4, 6.3] observed [-1.9, 7.6] expected
κ_{2V}	[0.57, 1.48] observed [0.41, 1.65] expected	[0.1, 2.0] observed [0.0, 2.1] expected

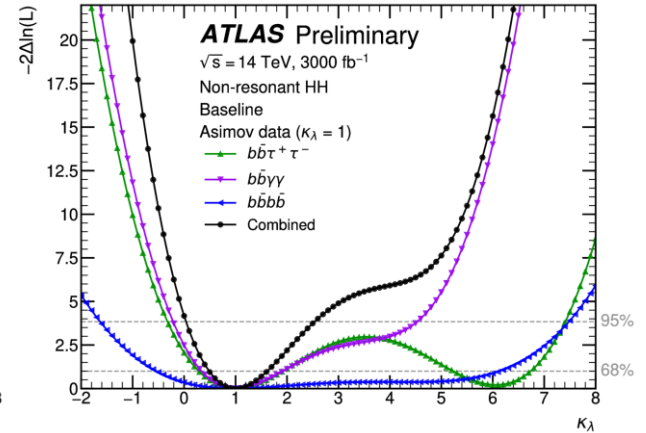
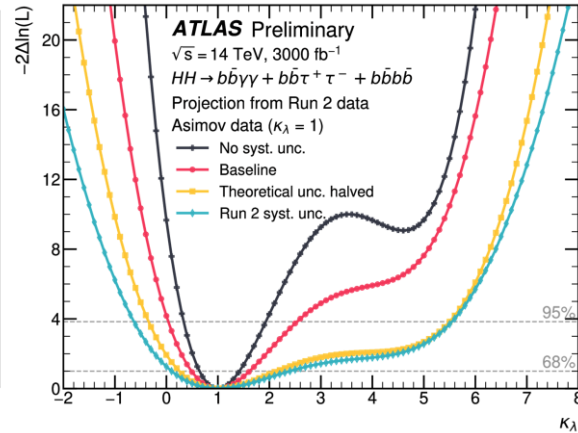
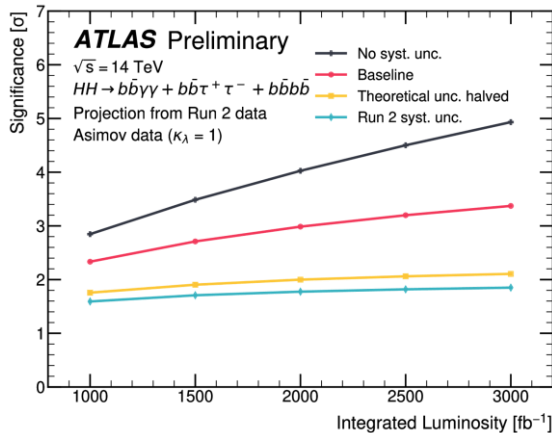


Dominant uncertainty: theory HH cross-section ($+6\%$ scale + m_{top})

Extrapolation to the High-Luminosity LHC

ATL-PHYS-PUB-2022-053

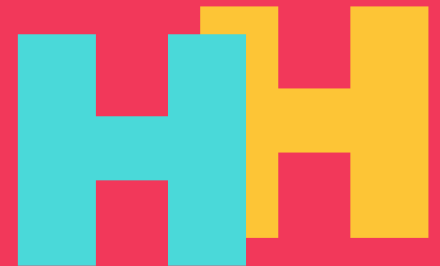
- HL-LHC: $\sqrt{s} = 13 \text{ TeV} \rightarrow 14 \text{ TeV}$, $140 \text{ fb}^{-1} \rightarrow 3000 \text{ fb}^{-1}$, planned start in 2029
- Extrapolation only done with 3 dominant channels ($b\bar{b}b\bar{b} + b\bar{b}\tau^+\tau^- + b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$), based on previous round of full Run-2 results
 - 13% improvement already in reoptimized Run-2 analyses, Run 3 under way
- Baseline assuming 2× reduction in theory modelling uncertainty and 2× better b -tagging
 - HH discovery significance 3.4σ , allowed 95% confidence interval for κ_λ expected to be [0.0, 2.5]



Summary

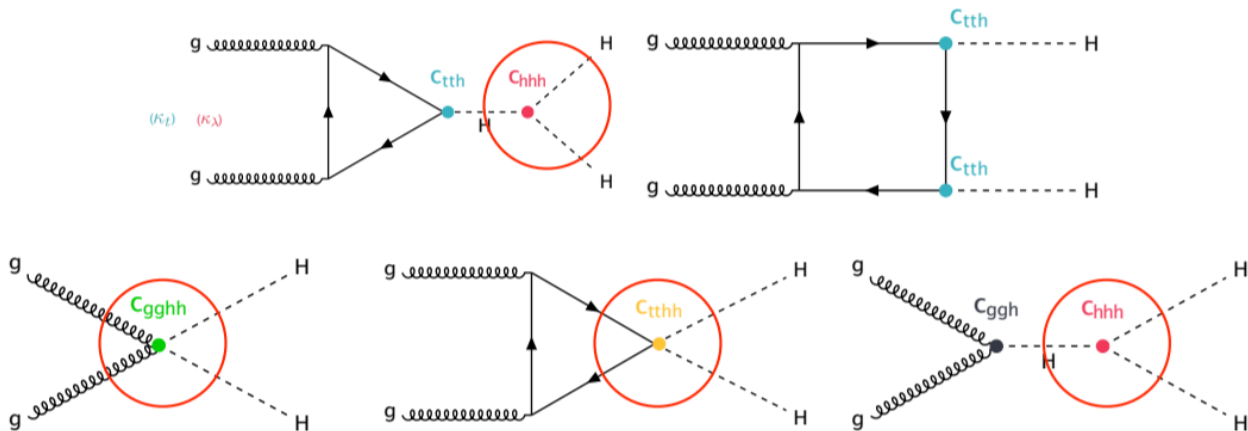
- Higgs pair production provides a **direct probe** of the **Higgs self-coupling** and therefore the Higgs potential
- HH production is **rare** and requires highly **optimised analyses**
- Searches conducted by ATLAS cover **>50% of Standard Model HH decays**
- Reoptimised full Run-2 analyses significantly improve sensitivity
 - Best expected sensitivity to HH cross-section and Higgs self-coupling to date achieved by ATLAS
 - Signal strength: $\mu_{HH} < 2.9$ (2.4 expected)
 - Higgs self-coupling modifier: $-1.2 < \kappa_\lambda < 7.2$ ($-1.6 < \kappa_\lambda < 7.2$ expected)
 - Dominant uncertainties are in the **theoretical cross-section** and $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ background estimation
- Promising Run-3 and HL-LHC prospects
 - Discovery significance $> 3\sigma$ expected

Backup



Higgs effective field theory interpretations

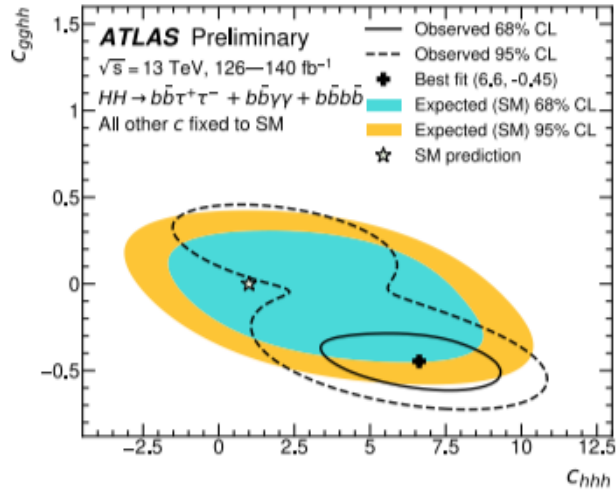
- Effect of BSM physics is parameterised through the addition of higher-orders operators with effective couplings at the low-energy scale
- In HEFT, at leading order there are 5 operators for HH production and their corresponding Wilson coefficients representing the Higgs boson coupling modifiers affecting ggF HH production
- HH production has unique access to c_{hhh} , c_{tthh} and c_{gggh}



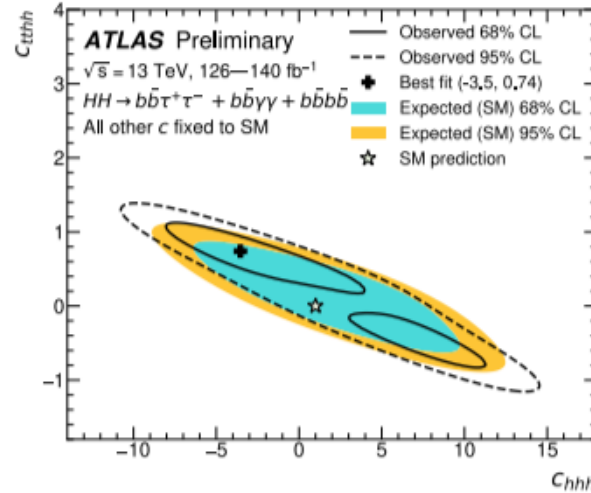
HH combination HEFT interpretation

ATLAS-CONF-2024-006

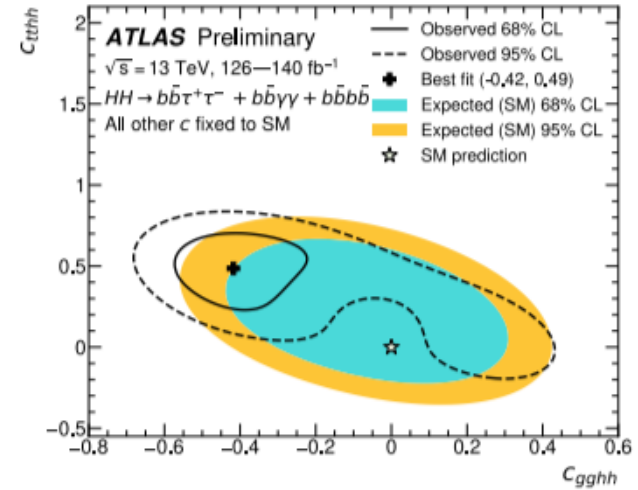
C_{hhh} - C_{gghh}



C_{hhh} - C_{gghh}



C_{gghh} - C_{tthh}

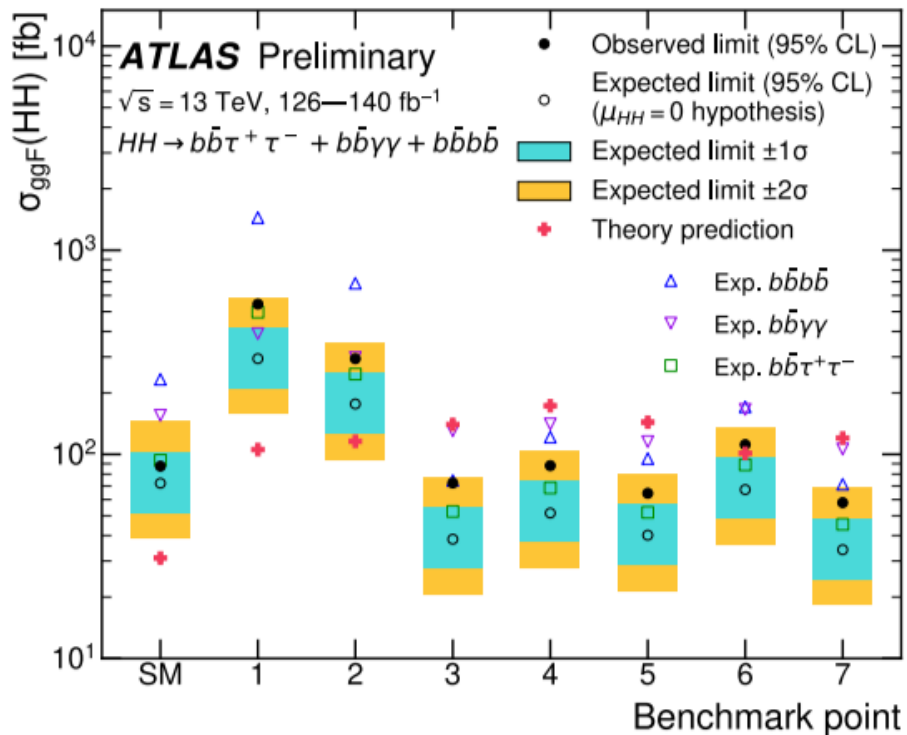


- Two minima are expected because of the quadratic dependence of the cross-section on the coefficients
- Best fit driven by $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ – background mismodelling making non-SM signals more favorable

HEFT benchmark models – HH combination

[ATLAS-CONF-2024-006](#)

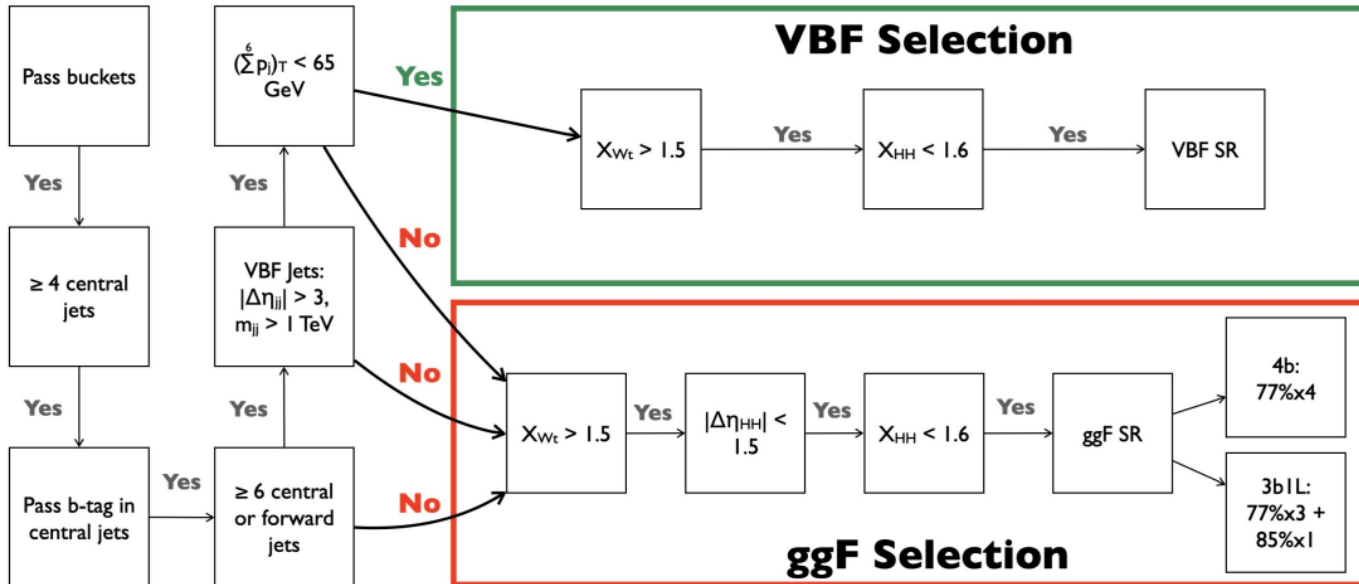
Benchmark	c_{hhh}	c_{tth}	c_{ggh}	c_{gggh}	c_{tthh}
SM	1.00	1.00	0	0	0
1	5.11	1.10	0	0	0
2	6.84	1.03	-1/3	0	1/6
3	2.21	1.05	1/2	1/2	-1/3
4	2.79	0.90	-1/3	-1/2	-1/6
5	3.95	1.17	1/6	-1/2	-1/3
6	-0.68	0.90	1/2	1/4	-1/6
7	-0.10	0.94	1/6	-1/6	1



Resolved $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ event selection

Phys. Rev. D 108 (2023) 052003

- Top veto: $X_{Wt} = \sqrt{\left(\frac{m_W - 80.4 \text{ GeV}}{0.1m_W}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{m_t - 172.5 \text{ GeV}}{0.1m_t}\right)^2} \geq 1.5$



Central jets:

- $p_T > 40 \text{ GeV}$
- $|\eta| < 2.5$

Forward jets:

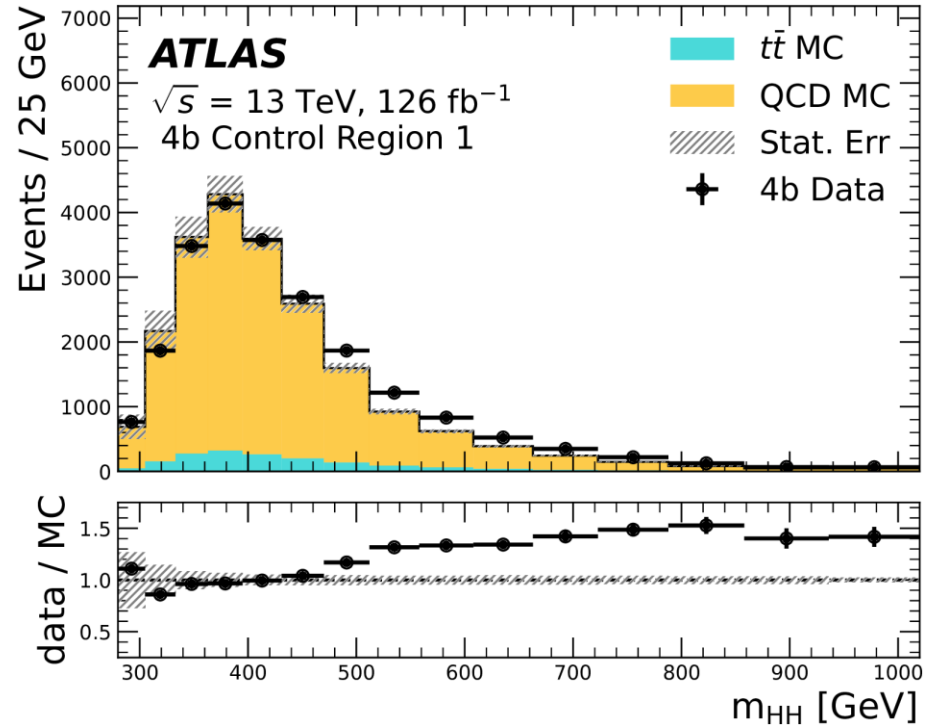
- $p_T > 30 \text{ GeV}$
- $|\eta| > 2.5$

VBF jets:

- passing central and forward jet selection
- non- b -tagged
- pair with highest m_{jj}

$b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ background estimation motivation

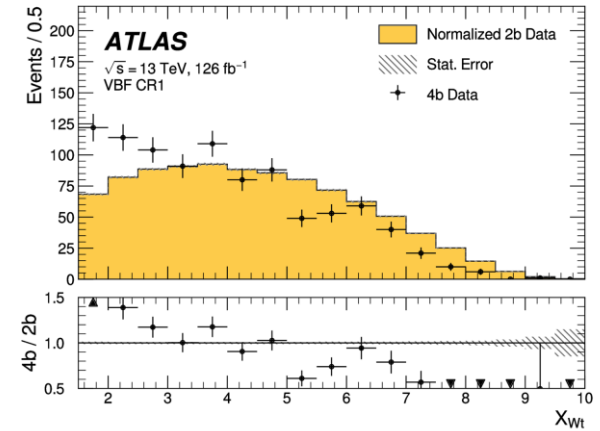
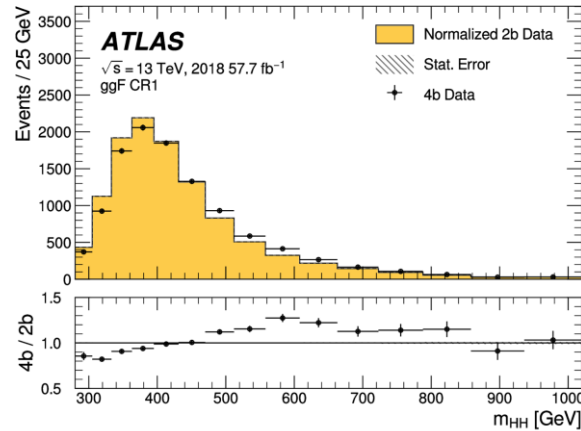
- Discrepancy between simulated background and data indicates alternative background estimation is needed



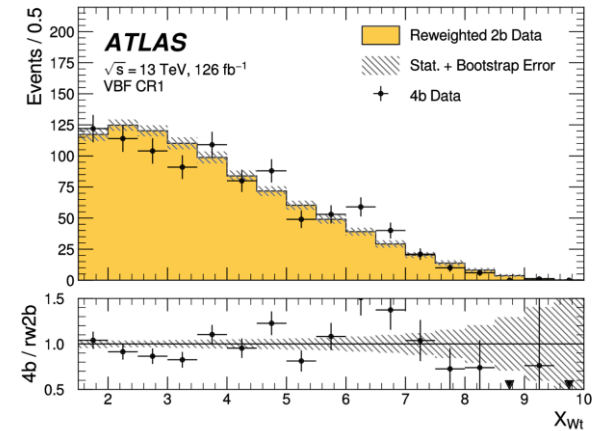
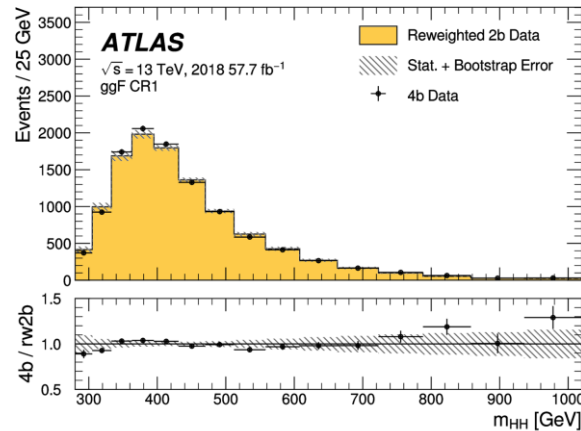
[Phys. Rev. D 108 \(2023\) 052003](#)

Resolved $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ background estimation

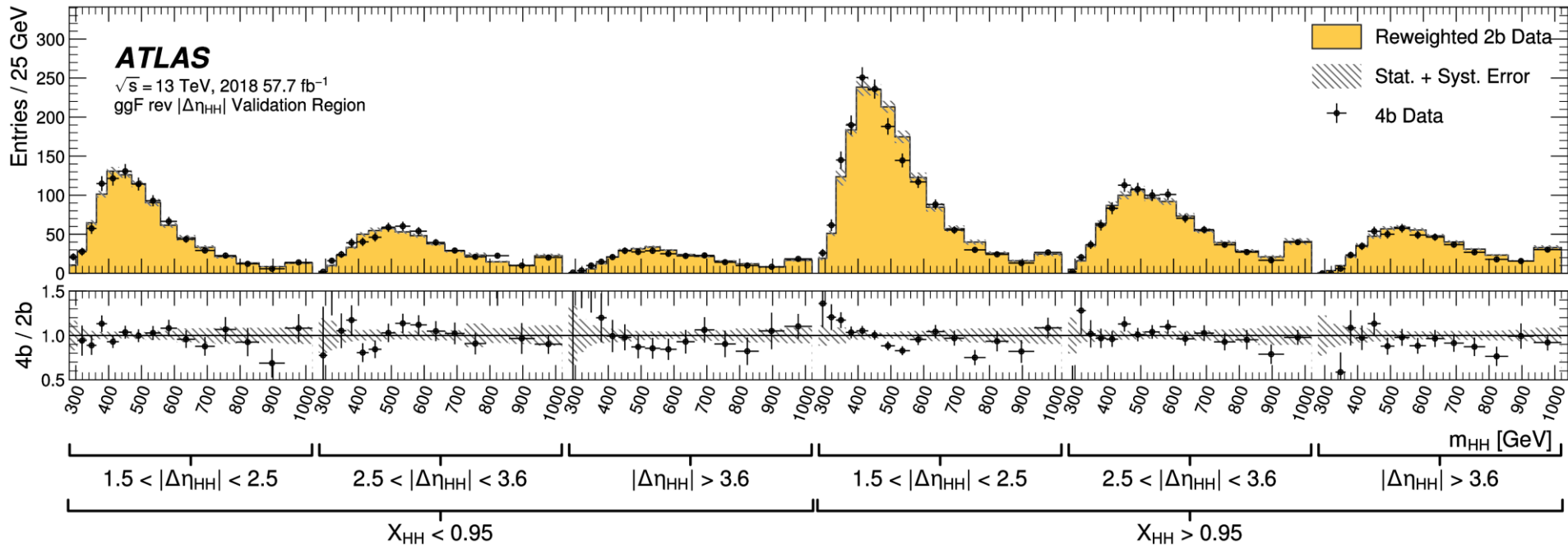
- Control region before reweighting:



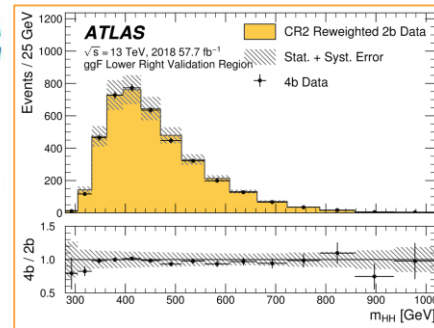
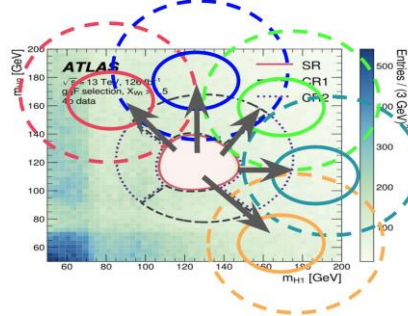
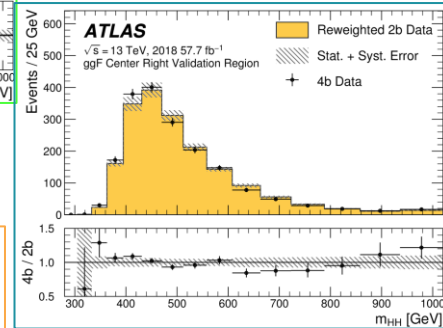
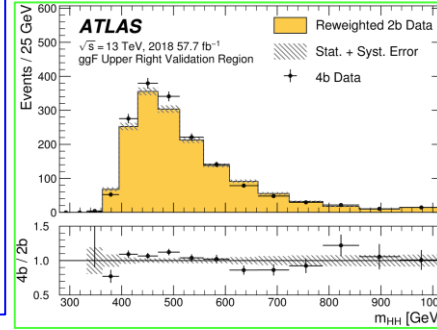
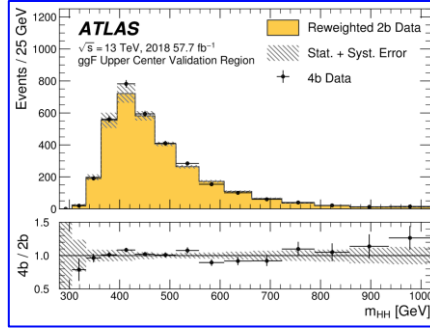
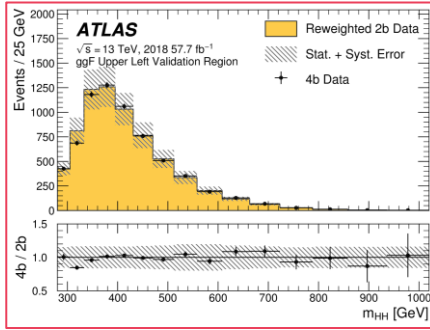
- Control region after reweighting:



Resolved $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ background estimation validation: reverse $|\Delta\eta_{HH}|$ region



Resolved $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ background estimation validation: shifted regions

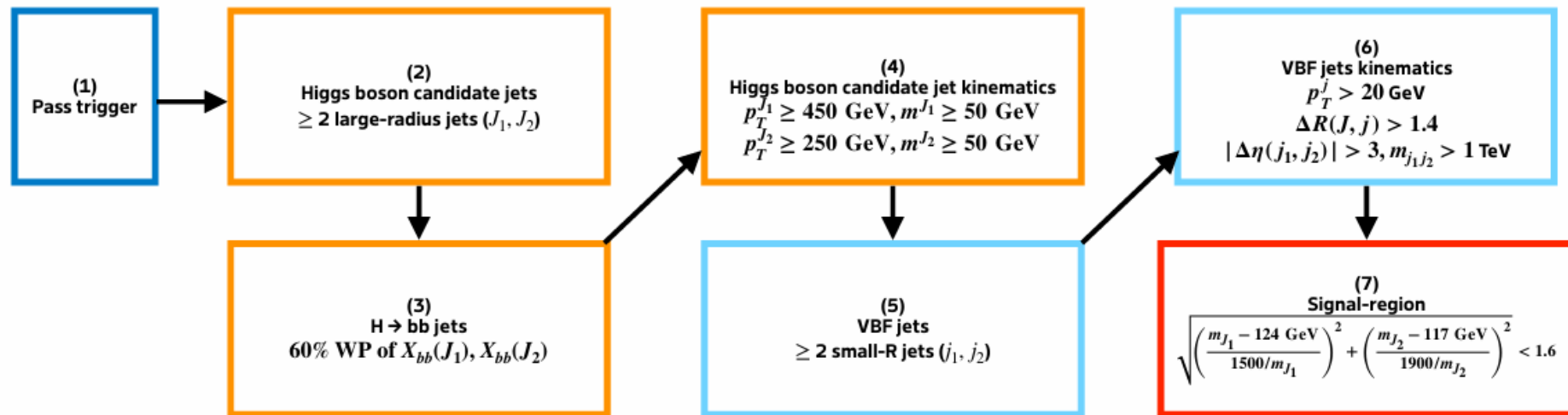


- Background modelling is good in shifted validation regions

[Phys. Rev. D 108 \(2023\) 052003](https://arxiv.org/abs/2205.00033)

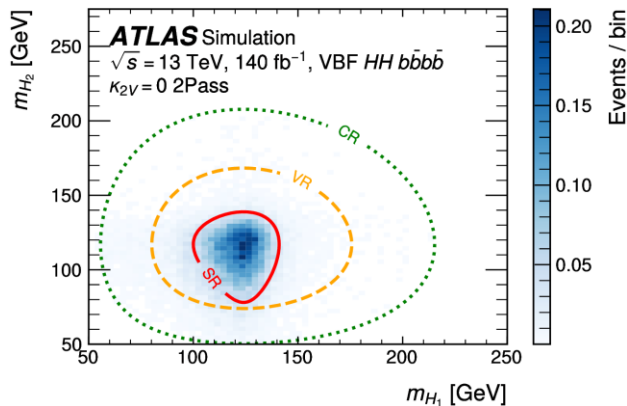
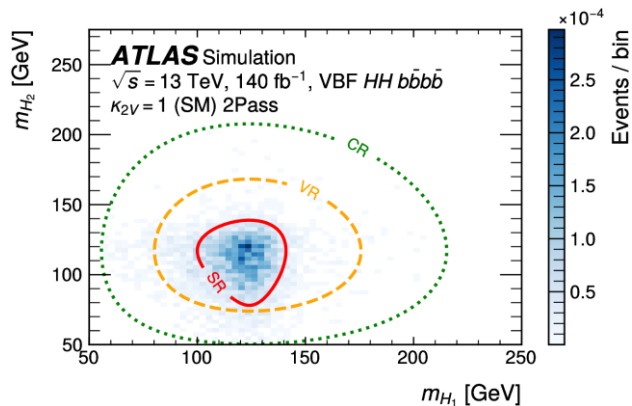
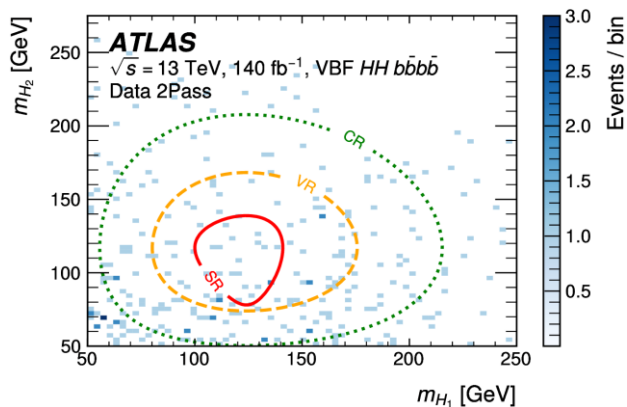
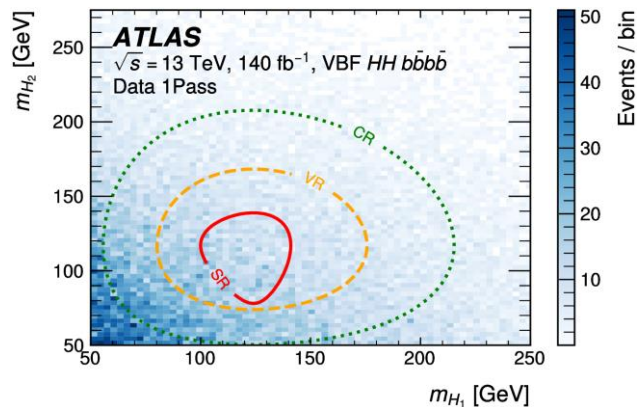
Boosted $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ VBF selection

[arXiv:2404.17193](https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.17193)



Boosted $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ mass planes

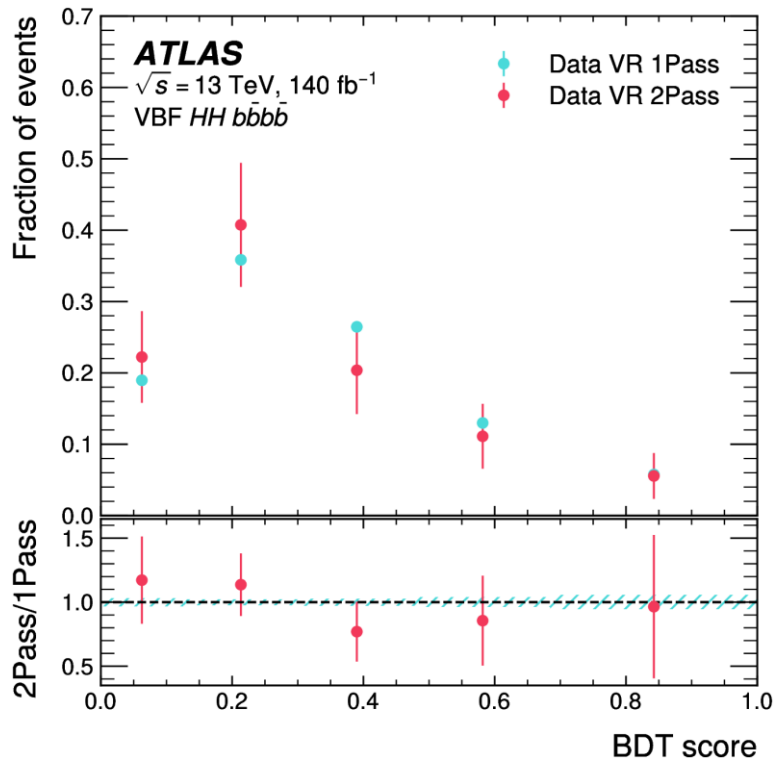
[arXiv:2404.17193](https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.17193)



Boosted $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ background estimation

- BDT score in validation region (VR):

[arXiv:2404.17193](https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.17193)



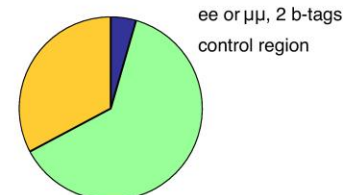
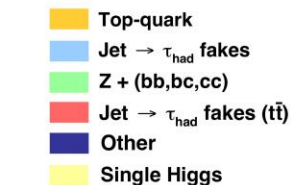
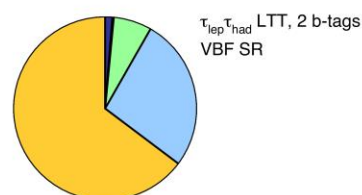
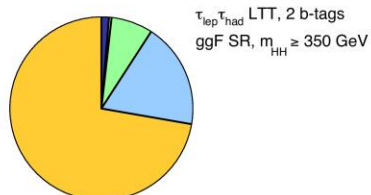
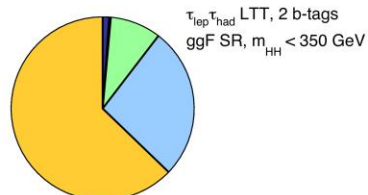
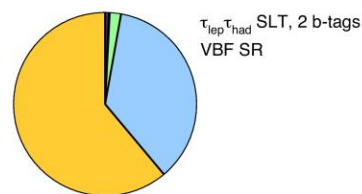
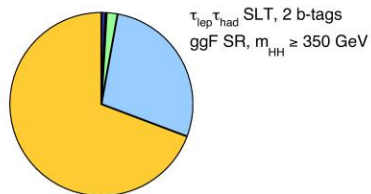
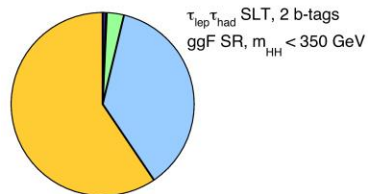
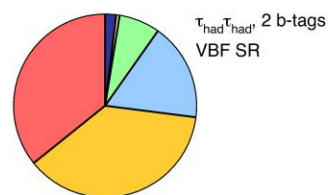
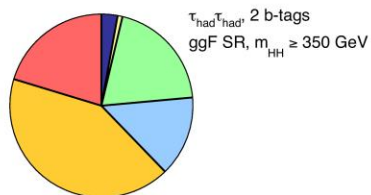
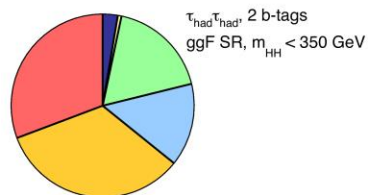
- 1Pass = 1 double- b -tagged large-radius jet
- 2Pass = 2 double- b -tagged large-radius jets
- 1Pass is within statistical uncertainty of 2Pass
→ only need to derive normalization factor to interpolate to signal region

$b\bar{b}\tau^-\tau^+$ background composition

ATLAS

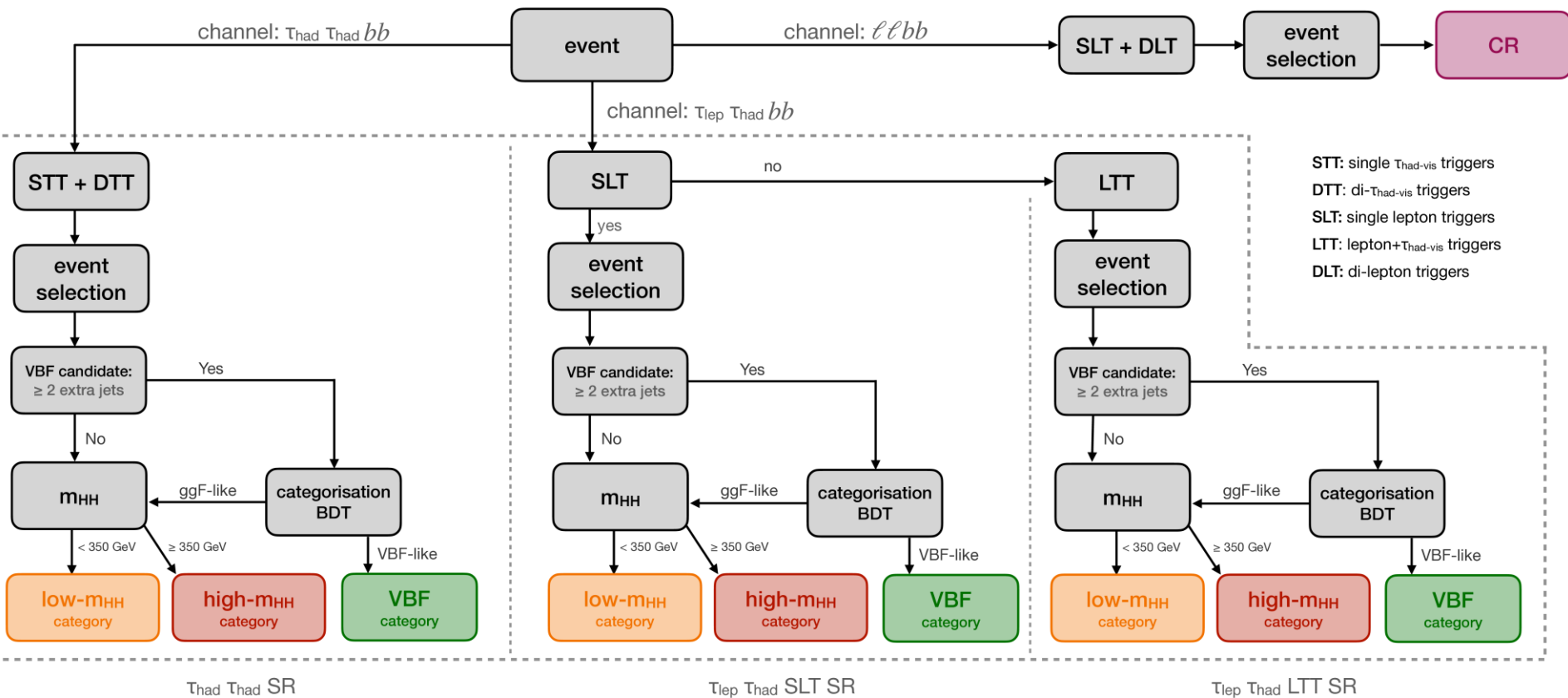
$\sqrt{s} = 13 \text{ TeV}, 140 \text{ fb}^{-1}$

[arXiv:2404.12660](https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.12660)



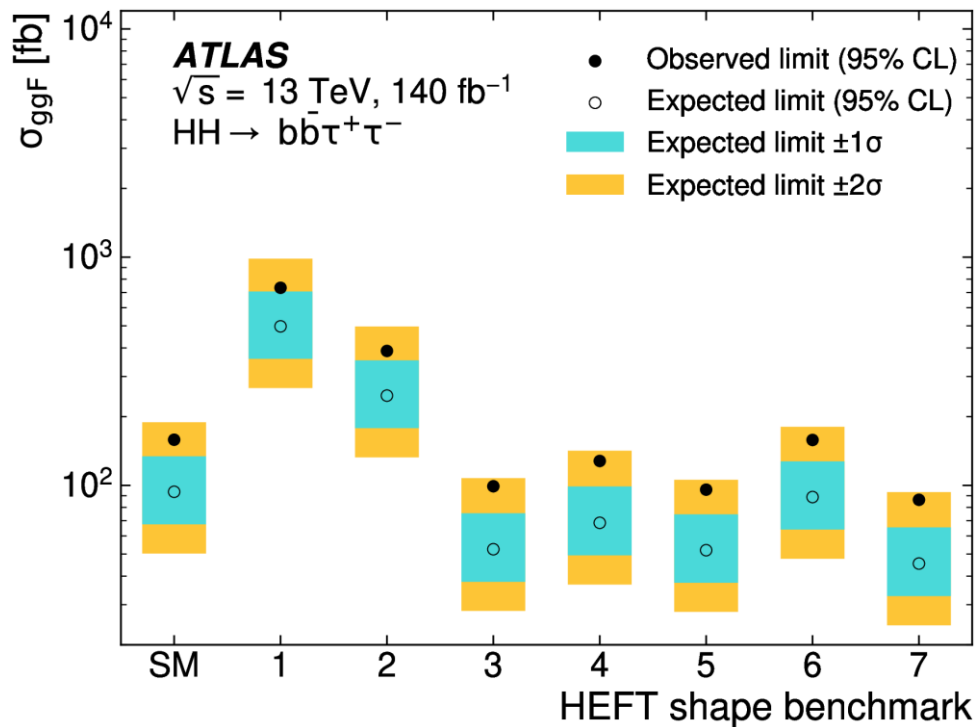
$b\bar{b}\tau^-\tau^+$ category and region definitions

arXiv:2404.12660



$b\bar{b}\tau^-\tau^+$ HEFT results

[arXiv:2404.12660](https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.12660)



Systematic uncertainties and correlation

- No additional pruning is applied in the combination

Final object reconstructions	bbbb	bb $\tau\tau$	bby γ	bb $\ell\ell$ +E $_T^{\text{miss}}$	multilepton
Luminosity/pileup	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
b-tagging	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boosted jet/b-tag	✓				
Electrons		✓		✓	✓
Muons		✓		✓	✓
Taus		✓			✓
Photons			✓		✓
E $_T^{\text{miss}}$		✓	✓	✓	✓

- Common sources are correlated except if:
 - Different calibrations used
 - Different post fit profilings from different phase space

From [Rui Zhang's seminar](#)

Systematic uncertainties and correlation

HH signal modelling	bbbb	bb $\tau\tau$	bb $\gamma\gamma$	bb $\ell\ell$ +E $_T^{\text{miss}}$	multilepton
QCD scale + m_{top}	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PDF + α_s	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H branching ratio	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parton shower	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
κ interpolation	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Bkg. modelling	bbbb	bb $\tau\tau$	bb $\gamma\gamma$	bb $\ell\ell$ +E $_T^{\text{miss}}$	multilepton
Single Higgs		✓	✓		✓
Top quark		✓		✓	
Z + jets		✓		✓	✓
Diboson		✓			✓
Specific per chan.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

- Dominant uncertainties:

From [Rui Zhang's seminar](#)

- HH cross section theory calculation QCD scale + m_{top} (pre-fit +6%, -23% on ggF HH)
- Normalisation of single H + heavy-flavour jets on ggF (pre-fit 100% on ggF H yields)

Channels and assumptions in combination

- Combinations assume that new physics affects only the Higgs boson self-coupling
- $HH + H$ combination provides results from a fit allowing more coupling modifiers accounting for interactions of the Higgs boson with other Standard Model particles:
 - $-1.4 < \kappa_\lambda < 6.1$ at 95% CL
- $HH + H$ combination analysis channels:

[Phys. Lett. B, 843 \(2023\)](#)

HH	H
$HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\tau^+\tau^-$ $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$	$H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$ $H \rightarrow ZZ^* \rightarrow 4\ell$ $H \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$ $H \rightarrow WW^* \rightarrow e\nu\mu\nu$ (ggF, VBF) $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ (VH) $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ (VBF) $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$ ($t\bar{t}H$)