



Search for dijet resonances using events with three jets in proton-proton collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV

The CMS Collaboration *

CERN, Switzerland

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ABSTRACT

A search for a narrow resonance with a mass between 350 and 700 GeV, and decaying into a pair of jets, is performed using proton-proton collision events containing at least three jets. The data sample corresponds to an integrated luminosity of 18.3 fb^{-1} recorded at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV with the CMS detector. Data are collected with a technique known as “data scouting”, in which the events are reconstructed, selected, and recorded at a high rate in a compact form by the high-level trigger. The three-jet final state provides sensitivity to lower resonance masses than in previous searches using the data scouting technique. The spectrum of the dijet invariant mass, calculated from the two jets with the largest transverse momenta in the event, is used to search for a resonance. No significant excess over a smoothly falling background is found. Limits at 95% confidence level are set on the production cross section of a narrow dijet resonance and compared with the cross section of a vector dark matter mediator coupling to dark matter particles and quarks. Translating to a model where the narrow resonance interacts only with quarks, upper limits on this coupling range between 0.10 and 0.15, depending on the resonance mass. These results represent the most stringent upper limits in the mass range between 350 and 450 GeV obtained with a flavor-inclusive dijet resonance search.

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1. Introduction

Many models of new physics predict the existence of new massive particles coupled to quarks. The production and decay of these particles into two jets, known as dijets, have been searched for since the first high-energy hadron colliders came into operation [1–9]. In some models, these particles act as mediators linking the standard model (SM) to new physics sectors containing dark matter (DM) particle candidates [10–13]. New mediators interacting with both quarks and DM particles (χ) have been searched for using different methods: in the direct searches for DM, by measuring the recoil of an SM particle caused by the scattering with a DM particle ($\chi q \rightarrow \chi q$, t -channel) [14–24]; with astrophysics detectors, by looking for SM particles produced through the annihilation of DM particles ($\chi\chi \rightarrow qq$, s -channel) [25–39]; and at hadron colliders, by detecting the momentum imbalance due to the production of DM particles ($qq \rightarrow \chi\chi$, s -channel) [40–46]. The search for dijet resonances at hadron colliders ($qq \rightarrow qq$, s -channel) can be compared with such DM searches and the results are particularly sensitive for models where the decay of the mediator into DM particles is forbidden for kinematic reasons. The search for di-

jet resonances is also sensitive to the signals predicted by other models [47–57].

Experiments at the CERN LHC have used various techniques to search for resonances in the dijet invariant mass spectrum. From searches where both jets are individually resolved, the ATLAS and CMS Collaborations have set limits for resonances with masses above 450 and 600 GeV, respectively, in $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV proton-proton collisions [58–60], and above 250 and 500 GeV, respectively, in 8 TeV collisions [61,62]. In the sub-TeV mass range, another search by the ATLAS Collaboration at 13 TeV for dijet resonances, produced in association with a photon from initial-state radiation, has set limits in the mass region between 225 and 1100 GeV [63]. A search by the CMS Collaboration at 8 TeV for resonances decaying into two bottom quarks, experimentally identified as b -tagged jets, has set limits in the mass range of 325–1200 GeV [64]. Finally, the ATLAS and CMS Collaborations have set limits in the mass range below 220 and 450 GeV, respectively, from searches for Lorentz-boosted resonances decaying into a quark-antiquark pair reconstructed as a single jet [65–67].

This paper presents a search for a dijet resonance in three-jet events that is sensitive to narrow resonances with mass between 350 and 700 GeV. The search is based on data from pp collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV collected in 2016, corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 18.3 fb^{-1} . To obtain a large trigger efficiency in the

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

mass range of 350–700 GeV, we select a three-jet final state and utilize a special high-rate trigger with low jet p_T thresholds. This trigger uses a technique known as “data scouting” described in Section 3. This search is limited to data collected in the year 2016 in order to take advantage of the low trigger thresholds used in that data period. After 2016, these thresholds were raised in order to limit the trigger rate increase due to the larger instantaneous luminosity and pileup.

2. The CMS detector

A detailed description of the CMS detector, together with a definition of the coordinate system used and the relevant kinematic variables, can be found in Ref. [68]. The central feature of the CMS apparatus is a superconducting solenoid of 6 m internal diameter, providing a magnetic field of 3.8 T. Within the solenoid volume are a 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. Muons are detected in gas-ionization chambers embedded in the steel flux-return yoke outside the solenoid.

The jets used by this analysis are calorimeter-based jets that are reconstructed from the energy deposits in the calorimeter towers, clustered using the anti- k_T algorithm [69,70] with a distance parameter of 0.4. In this process, the contribution from each calorimeter tower is assigned a momentum, the absolute value and the direction of which are found from the energy measured in the tower, and the coordinates of the geometrical center of the tower. The raw jet energy is obtained from the sum of the tower energies, and the raw jet momentum from the vectorial sum of the tower momenta. The raw jet energies are then corrected to establish a uniform relative response of the calorimeter in pseudorapidity η and a calibrated absolute response in transverse momentum p_T . The calorimetric jet energy resolution is typically 40% at a p_T of 10 GeV, 12% at 100 GeV, and 5% at 1 TeV, resulting in a calorimetric dijet mass resolution of about 10% for resonance masses between 350 and 700 GeV. Events of interest are selected using a two-tiered trigger system [71]. The first level (L1), composed of custom hardware processors, uses information from the calorimeters and muon detectors to select events at a rate of around 100 kHz within a time interval of less than 4 μ s. The second level, known as the high-level trigger (HLT), consists of a farm of processors running a version of the full event reconstruction software optimized for fast processing, and reduces the event rate to around 1 kHz before data storage.

3. Data and simulated event samples

We selected events requiring $H_T > 240$ GeV at the L1 trigger and $H_T > 250$ GeV at the HLT, where H_T is the scalar p_T sum of jets with $p_T > 40$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$. The rate of this trigger was about 4 kHz at an instantaneous luminosity of 1×10^{34} cm⁻²s⁻¹. The amount of data generated by such a high-rate trigger alone using the standard data-taking format would have saturated the computing and storage systems of the CMS experiment. For this reason, we used a special data-taking technique, which consisted of saving only the calorimeter-based jets reconstructed by the HLT, instead of the full detector readout. The size of this reduced data format is about 0.5% of the full event size. This technique is known as “data scouting” and was used in previous CMS dijet resonance searches [60,62].

Data scouting allows the analysis of a very large rate of data passing the HLT trigger, only limited by the overall rate of the L1 trigger. To keep a constant rate, the L1 trigger H_T threshold was raised from 240 to 360 GeV as the instantaneous luminosity increased. This search is limited to data collected in 2016 with the

lower L1 trigger threshold $H_T > 240$ GeV, in order to obtain the maximum sensitivity for low mass resonances. From a sample of events collected with a minimum-bias trigger and passing the selection discussed below, we measured a trigger efficiency larger than 99% for a dijet invariant mass greater than 290 GeV.

Signal events corresponding to a narrow vector resonance decaying into quark-antiquark pairs were generated using the MADGRAPH5_AMC@NLO version 2.2.2 generator at leading order [72,73], with the PYTHIA 8.205 generator [74] incorporating the CUETP8M1 underlying event tune [75] providing the description of fragmentation and hadronization. The generated resonance width is negligible compared to the experimental dijet mass resolution, which is about 10%. The detailed simulation of the CMS detector response is performed using the GEANT4 package [76]. The simulated signal events include multiple overlapping pp interactions per bunch crossing (pileup) as observed in the data. Additionally, to provide a framework for interpreting the results in terms of a DM mediator, signal cross sections were computed at leading order with MADGRAPH for a vector boson decaying into a quark-antiquark pair, with coupling to quarks $g_q = 0.25$, coupling to DM particles $g_{DM} = 1.0$, and the mass of DM particles 1 GeV. The NNPDF2.3LO [77] parton distribution functions were used.

4. Event reconstruction and selection

The discriminating variable in this analysis is the invariant mass of the two jets originating from the resonance decay. This variable is calculated using jets, reconstructed at the HLT from energy deposits in the calorimeter, and passing the selection $p_T > 30$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$. Spurious jets originating from instrumental noise are rejected by requiring each jet to be detected by both ECAL and HCAL, with at least 5% of the jet energy in each of the two types of calorimeter. We form “wide jets”, by clustering the jets already reconstructed by the HLT, using the anti- k_T algorithm with a distance parameter of 1.1. This algorithm improves the dijet mass resolution and the resonance search sensitivity, by recombining jets from hard final-state radiation to obtain a reduced number of wide jets. A similar algorithm using a merging distance of $\Delta R = \sqrt{(\Delta\eta)^2 + (\Delta\phi)^2} < 1.1$ was employed in previous CMS searches [60,62], but it only reconstructed two wide jets per event. The wide-jet calibrations for the 2016 data scouting sample were already obtained in the low-mass dijet search of Ref. [60], and therefore we apply the same calibrations. We require at least three wide jets, each with $p_T > 72$ GeV, in order to select events that have large H_T and pass the trigger selections. This requirement is particularly effective in selecting events with low dijet invariant mass, which would be rejected if only two jets were required. Applying a common threshold to the p_T of the three jets enabled us to minimize the value of the lowest resonance mass to which we are sensitive. The p_T threshold of the three-jet selection has been chosen with a method that is explained in the next section. Finally, the two leading wide jets are required to have $|\eta_1 - \eta_2| < 1.1$ to reduce the quantum chromodynamics multijet background, which is dominated by t -channel production of jets.

Since we require at least three wide jets in the event, there are multiple ways to select the dijet system, i.e., the pair of wide jets originating from the resonance decay. We select as the dijet the two wide jets with the largest and the next-to-largest p_T in the event. This selection is correct in 70 (50)% of simulated signal events with a resonance mass of 700 (350) GeV. Wrong combinations arise because either an energetic initial-state radiation jet is included in the dijet selection, or an energetic jet from final-state radiation is emitted with a distance $\Delta R > 1.1$ from the leading jets and therefore excluded from the reconstruction of the two leading wide jets. We investigated alternative criteria to select the dijet,

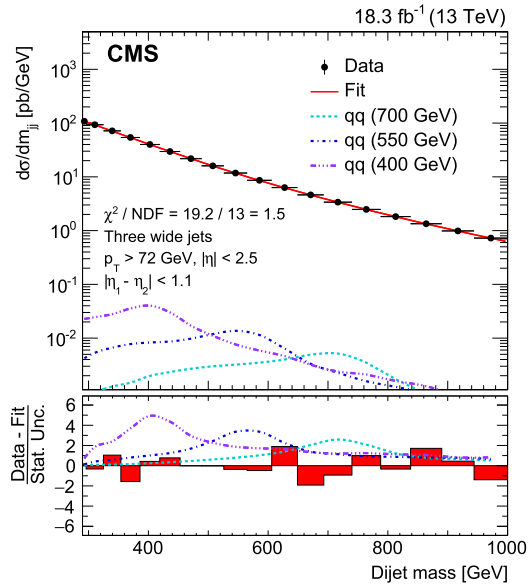


Fig. 1. Dijet mass spectrum (points) compared to a fitted parameterization of the background (solid curve). The background fit is performed in the range $290 < m_{jj} < 1000$ GeV. The horizontal bars show the widths of each bin in dijet mass. The dashed lines represent the dijet mass distribution from 400, 550, and 700 GeV resonance signals expected to be excluded at 95% CL by this analysis. The lower panel shows the difference between the data and the fitted parameterization, divided by the statistical uncertainty of the data.

such as choosing the jet pair with the largest norm of the vectorial sum p_T . We found that such alternative criteria do have better performance if the resonance p_T is greater than half the mass, but worse performance for this search. This is because, for accepted events, the p_T of the resonance is about 150 GeV, which is less than half the resonance mass considered in this search.

5. Dijet mass spectrum fit

Fig. 1 shows the dijet mass (m_{jj}) spectrum. The background is modeled with the following analytic function,

$$\frac{d\sigma}{dm_{jj}} = \frac{p_0(p_2x - 1)}{x^{p_1+p_3} \log x + p_4 \log^2 x}, \quad (1)$$

where x is defined as m_{jj}/\sqrt{s} , and p_0 , p_1 , p_2 , p_3 , and p_4 are free parameters of the fit. This function is similar to that used by previous dijet searches [58–62], with a modification to the numerator. The new parameterization better fits the shape of the dijet mass spectrum for three-jet events, which includes the effect of a small inefficiency to pass the trigger for events at the lowest values of dijet mass. The function has been chosen from a pool of functions using a Fisher test [78] with a 95% confidence level (CL). The pool of functions is obtained by changing the number of degrees of freedom of the polylogarithmic function in the exponent of the denominator of Eq. (1). We perform a maximum likelihood fit of the function in Eq. (1) to our data in the mass range $290 < m_{jj} < 1000$ GeV. The chi-square per number of degrees of freedom of the fit is $\chi^2/\text{NDF} = 19.3/13$, corresponding to a p -value of 0.11. Fig. 1 also shows the expected dijet mass distributions of a resonance signal for three different values of resonance mass. The data distribution is well modeled by the background parameterization and there is no evidence for a dijet resonance.

The dijet mass bin widths in Fig. 1 are the same as in the previous dijet searches, except for the first bin which is more narrow, starting at a dijet mass value of 290 GeV. This lower bound of the fit range and the jet p_T threshold for the three-jet selection are determined in the following way. We measure the distribution of

the dijet mass in a signal-depleted region defined by replacing the requirement $|\eta_1 - \eta_2| < 1.1$ with the requirement $|\eta_1 + \eta_2| < 1.1$. The dijet mass in the signal-depleted region is calculated after flipping the sign of η of the second jet—the sign of the z component of the momentum of the subleading jet is reversed and then the dijet mass is calculated. For background events, the dijet mass distribution in the signal-depleted region, so calculated, is closely similar to the dijet mass distribution in the signal region because the variables $\eta_1 - \eta_2$ in the signal region and $\eta_1 + \eta_2$ in the signal-depleted region have approximately the same uniform distribution between -1.1 and 1.1 . The signal-depleted region contains about the same number of background events and 50% fewer signal events, and 35% of the observed events in the signal-depleted region are also in the signal region. Small data-driven corrections, which change the observed number of events by less than 5%, are applied to the dijet mass distribution in the signal-depleted region to make it the same as the background distribution in the signal region. These corrections, which are applied as a function of the product of the two largest values of jet p_T in the event, are obtained by fitting an analytic function describing this product to the ratio of the numbers of events passing the signal selection to the number of events passing the signal-depleted selection. The lower edge of dijet mass included in the search, 290 GeV, has been chosen to be the lowest value of the corrected dijet mass in the signal-depleted region for which the fit of the background parameterization has a Kolmogorov–Smirnov (KS) probability [79–81] larger than 33%. The p_T threshold of the three-jet selection, 72 GeV, has been chosen to obtain the lowest possible value for the corrected dijet mass in the signal-depleted region that could be included in the fit and satisfy the same KS test. We verified that an injected signal with a strength corresponding to the 95% CL expected upper limit does not change the choice of the fit range and the three-jet selection.

6. Systematic uncertainties

The asymptotic approximation [82] of the modified frequentist CL_s method [83,84] is utilized to set upper limits on signal cross sections, following the prescription described in Ref. [85]. We use the profiled likelihood ratio as test statistic. The likelihood is the product of the Poisson probabilities for each of the bins in Fig. 1. The expected background yield of each bin is determined from the analytic function described in Eq. (1). The five parameters of the analytic function are profiled and their uncertainties from the fit to data are the dominant uncertainties. The shapes of the dijet mass distributions for signals are obtained from simulations. The systematic uncertainties affecting the signal shape and normalization have a minor impact and are incorporated into the likelihood function via nuisance parameters with log-normal probability distributions. We account for the uncertainty of 2% in the jet energy scale [86] by shifting the dijet mass of the signal distribution by $\pm 2\%$. The effect of the jet energy resolution uncertainty is included by varying the width of the signal distribution by $\pm 10\%$ [86]. The signal acceptance depends significantly on the presence of a jet from initial-state or final-state radiation. We estimated the uncertainty of the simulation related to this dependence by modifying by a factor of two both the renormalization (μ_R) and the factorization scales (μ_F) of the initial-state and final-state radiation using the method described in Ref. [87]. This uncertainty has a negligible effect on the shape of the dijet mass distribution of the signal, and changes the normalization by 10%. The uncertainty in the integrated luminosity is 2.5% [88] and affects directly the signal normalization. The systematic uncertainty due to the choice of the background function has been estimated by measuring the signal yield in pseudo-data spectra generated using alternative background functions. The measured cross section

Table 1

Acceptance for a vector resonance decaying into a dijet as a function of the resonance mass. The acceptance is calculated using signal simulations for the analysis selection, namely three wide jets with $p_T > 72$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$, and $|\eta_1 - \eta_2| < 1.1$. The errors are dominated by the uncertainty related to the modeling of the jet radiation used in signal simulations. We estimated this uncertainty by modifying by a factor of two both the renormalization (μ_R) and the factorization scales (μ_F) of the initial-state and final-state radiation [87].

Resonance mass	300 GeV	400 GeV	500 GeV	600 GeV	800 GeV
Acceptance	$(4.0 \pm 0.4)\%$	$(6.7 \pm 0.7)\%$	$(9.2 \pm 0.9)\%$	$(10.9 \pm 1.1)\%$	$(13.6 \pm 1.4)\%$

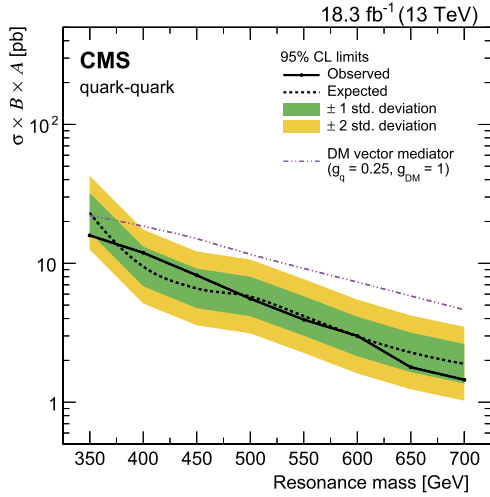


Fig. 2. Upper limits at 95% CL on the product of the cross section, branching fraction, and acceptance as a function of resonance mass for a narrow vector resonance decaying into a pair of quark jets. The acceptance is calculated for the analysis selection, namely three wide jets with $p_T > 72$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$, and $|\eta_1 - \eta_2| < 1.1$. The observed limits (solid curve), expected limits (dashed curve) and their variation at the 1 and 2 standard deviation levels (shaded bands) are shown. The dashed-dotted curve shows the expected cross section times acceptance for a DM mediator (see text).

in each case is the same as that of the injected signal, and this systematic uncertainty is found to be negligible. We tested the capability of the alternative functions to fit the multijet background by fitting the signal-depleted region described in Section 5. The systematic uncertainties related to pileup, parton distribution functions, underlying events, and parton shower models are also found to be negligible.

7. Results

Fig. 2 shows, as a function of resonance mass, observed and expected upper limits at 95% CL on the product of the cross section, branching fraction, and acceptance of a narrow vector resonance decaying to jets. Table 1 shows the acceptance calculated using signal simulations. Limits are presented for resonance masses between 350 and 700 GeV, for which the acceptance of the dijet mass requirement $290 < m_{jj} < 1000$ GeV is large enough to conduct the search. Fig. 3 shows that the 95% CL upper limits on the coupling g'_q of a vector resonance that decays only to quarks, defined according to the convention of Ref. [89], are between 0.10 and 0.15. Figs. 2 and 3 compare the upper limits on the cross section and the coupling g'_q , respectively, with the predictions of a model with a DM mediator that decays to DM particles with masses of 1 GeV, and also decays to quarks. This analysis excludes a benchmark model of such a DM mediator with coupling to quarks $g_q = 0.25$ and coupling to DM particles $g_{DM} = 1$, over the complete mass range 350 to 700 GeV. In our notation, g'_q is the coupling for a model in which the resonance couples to quarks only, and g_q is the coupling to quarks for a model in which the resonance also

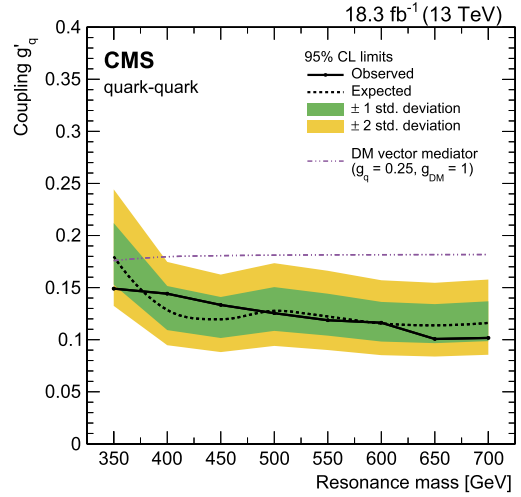


Fig. 3. Upper limits at 95% CL on the universal quark coupling g'_q , as a function of resonance mass, for a narrow vector resonance that only couples to quarks. The observed limits (solid curve), expected limits (dashed curve) and their variation at the 1 and 2 standard deviation levels (shaded bands) are shown. The dashed-dotted curve shows the coupling strength for which the cross section for dijet production in this model is the same as for a DM mediator (see text).

couples to DM particles. We convert g_q into g'_q using the following relationship

$$g'_q = \frac{g_q}{\sqrt{1 + 1/(3N_q(M_{\text{med}})g_q^2)}} \quad (2)$$

where $N_q(M_{\text{med}})$ is the effective number of quarks

$$N_q(M_{\text{med}}) = \sum_q \left(1 - 4 \frac{m_q^2}{M_{\text{med}}^2}\right)^{1/2} \left(1 + 2 \frac{m_q^2}{M_{\text{med}}^2}\right) \quad (3)$$

and the index q runs over the quark flavors (u, d, s, c, b, t) having $m_q < M_{\text{med}}/2$ [11,60].

8. Summary

A search for a narrow vector resonance of mass between 350 and 700 GeV decaying into two jets has been performed in events containing at least three jets using proton-proton collision data at $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV at the LHC corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 18.3 fb^{-1} . The dijet mass distribution of the two leading jets is smooth, and there is no evidence for a resonance. Upper limits at 95% confidence level are set on the product of the cross section, branching fraction, and acceptance as a function of resonance mass. This search excludes a simplified model of interactions between quarks and dark matter particles of mass 1 GeV, where the interactions are mediated by a vector particle with mass between 350 and 700 GeV, for coupling strengths of $g_q = 0.25$ and $g_{DM} = 1$. Upper limits between 0.10 and 0.15 are also set on the coupling to quarks g'_q for a vector particle interacting only with quarks. These results represent the most stringent upper limits in the mass range

between 350 and 450 GeV obtained with a flavor-inclusive dijet resonance search.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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The CMS Collaboration

A.M. Sirunyan[†], A. Tumasyan

Yerevan Physics Institute, Yerevan, Armenia

W. Adam, F. Ambroggi, T. Bergauer, M. Dragicevic, J. Erö, A. Escalante Del Valle, M. Flechl, R. Frühwirth¹, M. Jeitler¹, N. Krammer, I. Krätschmer, D. Liko, T. Madlener, I. Mikulec, N. Rad, J. Schieck¹, R. Schöfbeck, M. Spanring, D. Spitzbart, W. Waltenberger, C.-E. Wulz¹, M. Zarucki

Institut für Hochenergiephysik, Wien, Austria

V. Drugakov, V. Mossolov, J. Suarez Gonzalez

Institute for Nuclear Problems, Minsk, Belarus

M.R. Darwish, E.A. De Wolf, D. Di Croce, X. Janssen, A. Lelek, M. Pieters, H. Rejeb Sfar, H. Van Haevermaet, P. Van Mechelen, S. Van Putte, N. Van Remortel

Universiteit Antwerpen, Antwerpen, Belgium

F. Blekman, E.S. Bols, S.S. Chhibra, J. D'Hondt, J. De Clercq, D. Lontkovskyi, S. Lowette, I. Marchesini, S. Moortgat, Q. Python, K. Skovpen, S. Tavernier, W. Van Doninck, P. Van Mulders

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussel, Belgium

D. Beghin, B. Bilin, B. Clerboux, G. De Lentdecker, H. Delannoy, B. Dorney, L. Favart, A. Grebenyuk, A.K. Kalsi, A. Popov, N. Postiau, E. Starling, L. Thomas, C. Vander Velde, P. Vanlaer, D. Vannerom

Université Libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, Belgium

T. Cornelis, D. Dobur, I. Khvastunov², M. Niedziela, C. Roskas, M. Tytgat, W. Verbeke, B. Vermassen, M. Vit

Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium

O. Bondu, G. Bruno, C. Caputo, P. David, C. Delaere, M. Delcourt, A. Giammanco, V. Lemaitre, J. Prisciandaro, A. Saggio, M. Vidal Marono, P. Vischia, J. Zobec

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

F.L. Alves, G.A. Alves, G. Correia Silva, C. Hensel, A. Moraes, P. Rebello Teles

Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Físicas, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

E. Belchior Batista Das Chagas, W. Carvalho, J. Chinellato³, E. Coelho, E.M. Da Costa, G.G. Da Silveira⁴, D. De Jesus Damiao, C. De Oliveira Martins, S. Fonseca De Souza, L.M. Huertas Guativa, H. Malbouisson, J. Martins⁵, D. Matos Figueiredo, M. Medina Jaime⁶, M. Melo De Almeida, C. Mora Herrera, L. Mundim, H. Nogima, W.L. Prado Da Silva, L.J. Sanchez Rosas, A. Santoro, A. Sznajder, M. Thiel, E.J. Tonelli Manganote³, F. Torres Da Silva De Araujo, A. Vilela Pereira

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

C.A. Bernardes^a, L. Calligaris^a, T.R. Fernandez Perez Tomei^a, E.M. Gregores^b, D.S. Lemos, 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, G. Antchev, R. Hadjiiska, P. Iaydjiev, M. Misheva, M. Rodozov, M. Shopova, G. Sultanov

Institute for Nuclear Research and Nuclear Energy, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria

M. Bonchev, A. Dimitrov, T. Ivanov, L. Litov, B. Pavlov, P. Petkov

University of Sofia, Sofia, Bulgaria

W. Fang⁷, X. Gao⁷, L. Yuan

Beihang University, Beijing, China

M. Ahmad, Z. Hu, Y. Wang

Department of Physics, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China

G.M. Chen, H.S. Chen, M. Chen, C.H. Jiang, D. Leggat, H. Liao, Z. Liu, A. Spiezia, J. Tao, E. Yazgan, H. Zhang, S. Zhang⁸, J. Zhao

Institute of High Energy Physics, Beijing, China

A. Agapitos, Y. Ban, G. Chen, A. Levin, J. Li, L. Li, Q. Li, Y. Mao, S.J. Qian, D. Wang, Q. Wang

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

M. Xiao

Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China

C. Avila, A. Cabrera, C. Florez, C.F. González Hernández, M.A. Segura Delgado

Universidad de Los Andes, Bogota, Colombia

J. Mejia Guisao, J.D. Ruiz Alvarez, C.A. Salazar González, N. Vanegas Arbelaez

Universidad de Antioquia, Medellin, Colombia

D. Giljanović, N. Godinovic, D. Lelas, I. Puljak, T. Sculac

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, D. Ferencek, K. Kadija, B. Mesic, M. Roguljic, A. Starodumov⁹, T. Susa

Institute Rudjer Boskovic, Zagreb, Croatia

M.W. Ather, A. Attikis, E. Erodotou, A. Ioannou, M. Kolosova, S. Konstantinou, G. Mavromanolakis, J. Mousa, C. Nicolaou, F. Ptochos, P.A. Razis, H. Rykaczewski, D. Tsiakkouri

University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

M. Finger¹⁰, M. Finger Jr.¹⁰, A. Kveton, J. Tomsa

Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

E. Ayala

Escuela Politecnica Nacional, Quito, Ecuador

E. Carrera Jarrin

Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Quito, Ecuador

Y. Assran^{11,12}, S. Elgammal¹²

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

S. Bhowmik, A. Carvalho Antunes De Oliveira, R.K. Dewanjee, K. Ehataht, M. Kadastik, M. Raidal, C. Veelken

National Institute of Chemical Physics and Biophysics, Tallinn, Estonia

P. Eerola, L. Forthomme, H. Kirschenmann, K. Osterberg, M. Voutilainen

Department of Physics, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

F. Garcia, J. Havukainen, J.K. Heikkilä, V. Karimäki, M.S. Kim, R. Kinnunen, T. Lampén, K. Lassila-Perini, S. Laurila, S. Lehti, T. Lindén, P. Luukka, T. Mäenpää, H. Siikonen, E. Tuominen, J. Tuominiemi

Helsinki Institute of Physics, Helsinki, Finland

T. Tuuva

Lappeenranta University of Technology, Lappeenranta, Finland

M. Besancon, F. Couderc, M. Dejardin, D. Denegri, B. Fabbro, J.L. Faure, F. Ferri, S. Ganjour, A. Givernaud, P. Gras, G. Hamel de Monchenault, P. Jarry, C. Leloup, B. Lenzi, E. Locci, J. Malcles, J. Rander, A. Rosowsky, M.Ö. Sahin, A. Savoy-Navarro¹³, M. Titov, G.B. Yu

IRFU, CEA, Université Paris-Saclay, Gif-sur-Yvette, France

S. Ahuja, C. Amendola, F. Beaudette, P. Busson, C. Charlot, B. Diab, G. Falmagne, R. Granier de Cassagnac, I. Kucher, A. Lobanov, C. Martin Perez, M. Nguyen, C. Ochando, P. Paganini, J. Rembser, R. Salerno, J.B. Sauvan, Y. Sirois, A. Zabi, A. Zghiche

Laboratoire Leprince-Ringuet, CNRS/IN2P3, Ecole Polytechnique, Institut Polytechnique de Paris, France

J.-L. Agram¹⁴, J. Andrea, D. Bloch, G. Bourgatte, J.-M. Brom, E.C. Chabert, C. Collard, E. Conte¹⁴, J.-C. Fontaine¹⁴, D. Gelé, U. Goerlach, M. Jansová, A.-C. Le Bihan, N. Tonon, P. Van Hove

Université de Strasbourg, CNRS, IPHC UMR 7178, 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, C. Bernet, G. Boudoul, C. Camen, A. Carle, N. Chanon, R. Chierici, D. Contardo, P. Depasse, H. El Mamouni, J. Fay, S. Gascon, M. Gouzevitch, B. Ille, Sa. Jain, F. Lagarde, I.B. Laktineh, H. Lattaud, A. Lesauvage, M. Lethuillier, L. Mirabito, S. Perries, V. Sordini, L. Torterotot, G. Touquet, M. Vander Donckt, S. Viret

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

G. Adamov*Georgian Technical University, Tbilisi, Georgia***Z. Tsamalaidze**¹⁰*Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia***C. Autermann, L. Feld, K. Klein, M. Lipinski, D. Meuser, A. Pauls, M. Preuten, M.P. Rauch, J. Schulz, M. Teroerde, B. Wittmer***RWTH Aachen University, I. Physikalisches Institut, Aachen, Germany***M. Erdmann, B. Fischer, S. Ghosh, T. Hebbeker, K. Hoepfner, H. Keller, L. Mastrolorenzo, M. Merschmeyer, A. Meyer, P. Millet, G. Mocellin, S. Mondal, S. Mukherjee, D. Noll, A. Novak, T. Pook, A. Pozdnyakov, T. Quast, M. Radziej, Y. Rath, H. Reithler, J. Roemer, A. Schmidt, S.C. Schuler, A. Sharma, S. Wiedenbeck, S. Zaleski***RWTH Aachen University, III. Physikalisches Institut A, Aachen, Germany***G. Flügge, W. Haj Ahmad**¹⁵, **O. Hlushchenko, T. Kress, T. Müller, A. Nowack, C. Pistone, O. Pooth, D. Roy, H. Sert, A. Stahl**¹⁶*RWTH Aachen University, III. Physikalisches Institut B, Aachen, Germany***M. Aldaya Martin, P. Asmuss, I. Babounikau, H. Bakhshiansohi, K. Beernaert, O. Behnke, A. Bermúdez Martínez, D. Bertsche, A.A. Bin Anuar, K. Borras**¹⁷, **V. Botta, A. Campbell, A. Cardini, P. Connor, S. Consuegra Rodríguez, C. Contreras-Campana, V. Danilov, A. De Wit, M.M. Defranchis, C. Diez Pardos, D. Domínguez Damiani, G. Eckerlin, D. Eckstein, T. Eichhorn, A. Elwood, E. Eren, E. Gallo**¹⁸, **A. Geiser, A. Grohsjean, M. Guthoff, M. Haranko, A. Harb, A. Jafari, N.Z. Jomhari, H. Jung, A. Kasem**¹⁷, **M. Kasemann, H. Kaveh, J. Keaveney, C. Kleinwort, J. Knolle, D. Krücker, W. Lange, T. Lenz, J. Lidrych, K. Lipka, W. Lohmann**¹⁹, **R. Mankel, I.-A. Melzer-Pellmann, A.B. Meyer, M. Meyer, M. Missiroli, J. Mnich, A. Mussgiller, V. Myronenko, D. Pérez Adán, S.K. Pflitsch, D. Pitzl, A. Raspereza, A. Saibel, M. Savitskyi, V. Scheurer, P. Schütze, C. Schwanenberger, R. Shevchenko, A. Singh, H. Tholen, O. Turkot, A. Vagnerini, M. Van De Klundert, R. Walsh, Y. Wen, K. Wichmann, C. Wissing, O. Zenaiev, R. Zlebick***Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron, Hamburg, Germany***R. Aggleton, S. Bein, L. Benato, A. Benecke, V. Blobel, T. Dreyer, A. Ebrahimi, F. Feindt, A. Fröhlich, C. Garbers, E. Garutti, D. Gonzalez, P. Gunnellini, J. Haller, A. Hinzmann, A. Karavdina, G. Kasieczka, R. Klanner, R. Kogler, N. Kovalchuk, S. Kurz, V. Kutzner, J. Lange, T. Lange, A. Malara, J. Multhaupt, C.E.N. Niemeyer, A. Perieanu, A. Reimers, O. Rieger, C. Scharf, P. Schleper, S. Schumann, J. Schwandt, J. Sonneveld, H. Stadie, G. Steinbrück, F.M. Stober, B. Vormwald, I. Zoi***University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany***M. Akbiyik, C. Barth, M. Baselga, S. Baur, T. Berger, E. Butz, R. Caspart, T. Chwalek, W. De Boer, A. Dierlamm, K. El Morabit, N. Faltermann, M. Giffels, P. Goldenzweig, A. Gottmann, M.A. Harrendorf, F. Hartmann**¹⁶, **U. Husemann, S. Kudella, S. Mitra, M.U. Mozer, D. Müller, Th. Müller, M. Musich, A. Nürnberg, G. Quast, K. Rabbertz, M. Schröder, I. Shvetsov, H.J. Simonis, R. Ulrich, M. Wassmer, M. Weber, C. Wöhrmann, R. Wolf***Karlsruher Institut fuer Technologie, Karlsruhe, Germany***G. Anagnostou, P. Asenov, G. Daskalakis, T. Gerasis, A. Kyriakis, D. Loukas, G. Paspalaki***Institute of Nuclear and Particle Physics (INPP), NCSR Demokritos, Aghia Paraskevi, Greece***M. Diamantopoulou, G. Karathanasis, P. Kontaxakis, A. Manousakis-katsikakis, A. Panagiotou, I. Papavergou, N. Saoulidou, A. Stakia, K. Theofilatos, K. Vellidis, E. Vourliotis***National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens, Greece*

G. Bakas, K. Kousouris, I. Papakrivopoulos, G. Tsipolitis

National Technical University of Athens, Athens, Greece

I. Evangelou, C. Foudas, P. Gianneios, P. Katsoulis, P. Kokkas, S. Mallios, K. Manitaras, N. Manthos, I. Papadopoulos, J. Strologas, F.A. Triantis, D. Tsitsonis

University of Ioánnina, Ioánnina, Greece

M. Bartók²⁰, R. Chudasama, M. Csanad, P. Major, K. Mandal, A. Mehta, M.I. Nagy, G. Pasztor, O. Surányi, G.I. Veres

MTA-ELTE Lendület CMS Particle and Nuclear Physics Group, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

G. Bencze, C. Hajdu, D. Horvath²¹, F. Sikler, T.Á. Vámi, V. Veszpremi, G. Vesztergombi[†]

Wigner Research Centre for Physics, Budapest, Hungary

N. Beni, S. Czellar, J. Karancsi²⁰, J. Molnar, Z. Szillasi

Institute of Nuclear Research ATOMKI, Debrecen, Hungary

P. Raics, D. Teyssier, Z.L. Trocsanyi, B. Ujvari

Institute of Physics, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary

T. Csorgo, W.J. Metzger, F. Nemes, T. Novak

Eszterhazy Karoly University, Karoly Robert Campus, Gyongyos, Hungary

S. Choudhury, J.R. Komaragiri, P.C. Tiwari

Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, India

S. Bahinipati²², C. Kar, G. Kole, P. Mal, V.K. Muraleedharan Nair Bindhu, A. Nayak²³, D.K. Sahoo²², S.K. Swain

National Institute of Science Education and Research, HBNI, Bhubaneswar, India

S. Bansal, S.B. Beri, V. Bhatnagar, S. Chauhan, R. Chawla, N. Dhingra, R. Gupta, A. Kaur, M. Kaur, S. Kaur, P. Kumari, M. Lohan, M. Meena, K. Sandeep, S. Sharma, J.B. Singh, A.K. Viridi, G. Walia

Panjab University, Chandigarh, India

A. Bhardwaj, B.C. Choudhary, R.B. Garg, M. Gola, S. Keshri, Ashok Kumar, M. Naimuddin, P. Priyanka, K. Ranjan, Aashaq Shah, R. Sharma

University of Delhi, Delhi, India

R. Bhardwaj²⁴, M. Bharti²⁴, R. Bhattacharya, S. Bhattacharya, U. Bhawandeep²⁴, D. Bhowmik, S. Dutta, S. Ghosh, B. Gomber²⁵, M. Maity²⁶, K. Mondal, S. Nandan, A. Purohit, P.K. Rout, G. Saha, S. Sarkar, T. Sarkar²⁶, M. Sharan, B. Singh²⁴, S. Thakur²⁴

Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, HBNI, Kolkata, India

P.K. Behera, P. Kalbhor, A. Muhammad, P.R. Pujahari, A. Sharma, A.K. Sikdar

Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Madras, India

D. Dutta, V. Jha, V. Kumar, D.K. Mishra, P.K. Netrakanti, L.M. Pant, P. Shukla

Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai, India

T. Aziz, M.A. Bhat, S. Dugad, G.B. Mohanty, N. Sur, RavindraKumar Verma

Tata Institute of Fundamental Research-A, Mumbai, India

S. Banerjee, S. Bhattacharya, S. Chatterjee, P. Das, M. Guchait, S. Karmakar, S. Kumar, G. Majumder, K. Mazumdar, N. Sahoo, S. Sawant

Tata Institute of Fundamental Research-B, Mumbai, India

S. Dube, B. Kansal, A. Kapoor, K. Kothekar, S. Pandey, A. Rane, A. Rastogi, S. Sharma

Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune, India

S. Chenarani²⁷, E. Eskandari Tadavani, S.M. Etesami²⁷, M. Khakzad, M. Mohammadi Najafabadi, M. Naseri, F. Rezaei Hosseinabadi

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

M. Felcini, M. Grunewald

University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

M. Abbrescia^{a,b}, R. Aly^{a,b,28}, C. Calabria^{a,b}, A. Colaleo^a, D. Creanza^{a,c}, L. Cristella^{a,b}, N. De Filippis^{a,c}, M. De Palma^{a,b}, A. Di Florio^{a,b}, W. Elmetenawee^{a,b}, L. Fiore^a, A. Gelmi^{a,b}, G. Iaselli^{a,c}, M. Ince^{a,b}, S. Lezki^{a,b}, G. Maggi^{a,c}, M. Maggi^a, J.A. Merlin, G. Miniello^{a,b}, S. My^{a,b}, S. Nuzzo^{a,b}, A. Pompili^{a,b}, G. Pugliese^{a,c}, R. Radogna^a, A. Ranieri^a, G. Selvaggi^{a,b}, L. Silvestris^a, F.M. Simone^{a,b}, R. Venditti^a, 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, C. Battilana^{a,b}, D. Bonacorsi^{a,b}, L. Borgonovi^{a,b}, S. Braibant-Giacomelli^{a,b}, R. Campanini^{a,b}, P. Capiluppi^{a,b}, A. Castro^{a,b}, F.R. Cavallo^a, C. Ciocca^a, G. Codispoti^{a,b}, M. Cuffiani^{a,b}, G.M. Dallavalle^a, F. Fabbri^a, A. Fanfani^{a,b}, E. Fontanesi^{a,b}, P. Giacomelli^a, C. Grandi^a, L. Guiducci^{a,b}, F. Iemmi^{a,b}, S. Lo Meo^{a,29}, S. Marcellini^a, G. Masetti^a, F.L. Navarra^{a,b}, A. Perrotta^a, F. Primavera^{a,b}, A.M. Rossi^{a,b}, T. Rovelli^{a,b}, G.P. Siroli^{a,b}, N. Tosi^a

^a INFN Sezione di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

^b Università di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

S. Albergo^{a,b,30}, S. Costa^{a,b}, A. Di Mattia^a, R. Potenza^{a,b}, A. Tricomi^{a,b,30}, C. Tuve^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Catania, Catania, Italy

^b Università di Catania, Catania, Italy

G. Barbagli^a, A. Cassese, R. Ceccarelli, V. Ciulli^{a,b}, C. Civinini^a, R. D'Alessandro^{a,b}, F. Fiori^a, E. Focardi^{a,b}, G. Latino^{a,b}, P. Lenzi^{a,b}, M. Meschini^a, S. Paoletti^a, G. Sguazzoni^a, L. Viliani^a

^a INFN Sezione di Firenze, Firenze, Italy

^b Università di Firenze, Firenze, Italy

L. Benussi, S. Bianco, D. Piccolo

INFN Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, Frascati, Italy

M. Bozzo^{a,b}, F. Ferro^a, R. Mulargia^{a,b}, E. Robutti^a, S. Tosi^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Genova, Genova, Italy

^b Università di Genova, Genova, Italy

A. Benaglia^a, A. Beschi^{a,b}, F. Brivio^{a,b}, V. Ciriolo^{a,b,16}, M.E. Dinardo^{a,b}, P. Dini^a, S. Gennai^a, A. Ghezzi^{a,b}, P. Govoni^{a,b}, L. Guzzi^{a,b}, M. Malberti^a, S. Malvezzi^a, D. Menasce^a, F. Monti^{a,b}, L. Moroni^a, M. Paganoni^{a,b}, D. Pedrini^a, S. Ragazzi^{a,b}, T. Tabarelli de Fatis^{a,b}, D. Valsecchi^{a,b}, D. Zuolo^{a,b}

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

^b Università di Milano-Bicocca, Milano, Italy

S. Buontempo^a, N. Cavallo^{a,c}, A. De Iorio^{a,b}, A. Di Crescenzo^{a,b}, F. Fabozzi^{a,c}, F. Fienga^a, G. Galati^a, A.O.M. Iorio^{a,b}, L. Lista^{a,b}, S. Meola^{a,d,16}, P. Paolucci^{a,16}, B. Rossi^a, C. Sciacca^{a,b}, E. Voevodina^{a,b}

^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. Boletti ^{a,b}, A. Bragagnolo ^{a,b}, R. Carlin ^{a,b}, P. Checchia ^a, P. De Castro Manzano ^a, T. Dorigo ^a, U. Dosselli ^a, F. Gasparini ^{a,b}, U. Gasparini ^{a,b}, A. Gozzelino ^a, S.Y. Hoh ^{a,b}, P. Lujan ^a, M. Margoni ^{a,b}, A.T. Meneguzzo ^{a,b}, J. Pazzini ^{a,b}, M. Presilla ^b, P. Ronchese ^{a,b}, R. Rossin ^{a,b}, F. Simonetto ^{a,b}, A. Tiko ^a, M. Tosi ^{a,b}, M. Zanetti ^{a,b}, P. Zotto ^{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

A. Braghieri ^a, D. Fiorina ^{a,b}, P. Montagna ^{a,b}, S.P. Ratti ^{a,b}, V. Re ^a, M. Ressegotti ^{a,b}, C. Riccardi ^{a,b}, P. Salvini ^a, I. Vai ^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}, L. Fanò ^{a,b}, P. Lariccia ^{a,b}, R. Leonardi ^{a,b}, E. Manoni ^a, G. Mantovani ^{a,b}, V. Mariani ^{a,b}, M. Menichelli ^a, A. Rossi ^{a,b}, A. Santocchia ^{a,b}, D. Spiga ^a

^a INFN Sezione di Perugia, Perugia, Italy
^b Università di Perugia, Perugia, Italy

K. Androsov ^a, P. Azzurri ^a, G. Bagliesi ^a, V. Bertacchi ^{a,c}, L. Bianchini ^a, T. Boccali ^a, R. Castaldi ^a, M.A. Ciocci ^{a,b}, R. Dell'Orso ^a, S. Donato ^a, G. Fedi ^a, L. Giannini ^{a,c}, A. Giassi ^a, M.T. Grippo ^a, F. Ligabue ^{a,c}, E. Manca ^{a,c}, G. Mandorli ^{a,c}, A. Messineo ^{a,b}, F. Palla ^a, A. Rizzi ^{a,b}, G. Rolandi ³¹, S. Roy Chowdhury, A. Scribano ^a, P. Spagnolo ^a, R. Tenchini ^a, G. Tonelli ^{a,b}, N. Turini, A. Venturi ^a, P.G. Verdini ^a

^a INFN Sezione di Pisa, Pisa, Italy
^b Università di Pisa, Pisa, Italy
^c Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Pisa, Italy

F. Cavallari ^a, M. Cipriani ^{a,b}, D. Del Re ^{a,b}, E. Di Marco ^a, M. Diemoz ^a, E. Longo ^{a,b}, P. Meridiani ^a, G. Organtini ^{a,b}, F. Pandolfi ^a, R. Paramatti ^{a,b}, C. Quaranta ^{a,b}, S. Rahatlou ^{a,b}, C. Rovelli ^a, F. Santanastasio ^{a,b}, L. Soffi ^{a,b}

^a INFN Sezione di Roma, Rome, Italy
^b Sapienza Università di Roma, Rome, Italy

N. Amapane ^{a,b}, R. Arcidiacono ^{a,c}, S. Argiro ^{a,b}, M. Arneodo ^{a,c}, N. Bartosik ^a, R. Bellan ^{a,b}, A. Bellora, C. Biino ^a, A. Cappati ^{a,b}, N. Cartiglia ^a, S. Cometti ^a, M. Costa ^{a,b}, R. Covarelli ^{a,b}, N. Demaria ^a, B. Kiani ^{a,b}, F. Legger, C. Mariotti ^a, S. Maselli ^a, E. Migliore ^{a,b}, V. Monaco ^{a,b}, E. Monteil ^{a,b}, M. Monteno ^a, M.M. Obertino ^{a,b}, G. Ortona ^{a,b}, 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. Salvatico ^{a,b}, V. Sola ^a, A. Solano ^{a,b}, D. Soldi ^{a,b}, A. Staiano ^a, D. Trocino ^{a,b}

^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}, M. Casarsa ^a, F. Cossutti ^a, A. Da Rold ^{a,b}, G. Della Ricca ^{a,b}, F. Vazzoler ^{a,b}, A. Zanetti ^a

^a INFN Sezione di Trieste, Trieste, Italy
^b Università di Trieste, Trieste, Italy

B. Kim, D.H. Kim, G.N. Kim, J. Lee, S.W. Lee, C.S. Moon, Y.D. Oh, S.I. Pak, S. Sekmen, D.C. Son, Y.C. Yang

Kyungpook National University, Daegu, Republic of Korea

H. Kim, D.H. Moon, G. Oh

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

B. Francois, T.J. Kim, J. Park

Hanyang University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

S. Cho, S. Choi, Y. Go, S. Ha, B. Hong, K. Lee, K.S. Lee, J. Lim, J. Park, S.K. Park, Y. Roh, J. Yoo

Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

J. Goh

Kyung Hee University, Department of Physics, Republic of Korea

H.S. Kim

Sejong University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

J. Almond, J.H. Bhyun, J. Choi, S. Jeon, J. Kim, J.S. Kim, H. Lee, K. Lee, S. Lee, K. Nam, M. Oh, S.B. Oh, B.C. Radburn-Smith, U.K. Yang, H.D. Yoo, I. Yoon

Seoul National University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

D. Jeon, J.H. Kim, J.S.H. Lee, I.C. Park, I.J. Watson

University of Seoul, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Y. Choi, C. Hwang, Y. Jeong, J. Lee, Y. Lee, I. Yu

Sungkyunkwan University, Suwon, Republic of Korea

V. Veckalns³²

Riga Technical University, Riga, Latvia

V. Dudenas, A. Juodagalvis, A. Rinkevicius, G. Tamulaitis, J. Vaitkus

Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania

Z.A. Ibrahim, F. Mohamad Idris³³, W.A.T. Wan Abdullah, M.N. Yusli, Z. Zolkapli

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

J.F. Benitez, A. Castaneda Hernandez, J.A. Murillo Quijada, L. Valencia Palomo

Universidad de Sonora (UNISON), Hermosillo, Mexico

H. Castilla-Valdez, E. De La Cruz-Burelo, I. Heredia-De La Cruz³⁴, R. Lopez-Fernandez, A. Sanchez-Hernandez

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

S. Carrillo Moreno, C. Oropeza Barrera, M. Ramirez-Garcia, F. Vazquez Valencia

Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City, Mexico

J. Eysermans, I. Pedraza, H.A. Salazar Ibarquen, C. Uribe Estrada

Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla, Puebla, Mexico

A. Morelos Pineda

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

J. Mijuskovic², N. Raicevic

University of Montenegro, Podgorica, Montenegro

D. Krofcheck

University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

S. Bheesette, P.H. Butler

University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

A. Ahmad, M. Ahmad, Q. Hassan, H.R. Hoorani, W.A. Khan, M.A. Shah, M. Shoaib, M. Waqas

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

V. Avati, L. Grzanka, M. Malawski

AGH University of Science and Technology Faculty of Computer Science, Electronics and Telecommunications, Krakow, Poland

H. Bialkowska, M. Bluj, B. Boimska, M. Górski, M. Kazana, M. Szleper, P. Zalewski

National Centre for Nuclear Research, Swierk, Poland

K. Bunkowski, A. Byszuk³⁵, K. Doroba, A. Kalinowski, M. Konecki, J. Krolikowski, M. Olszewski, M. Walczak

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

M. Araujo, P. Bargassa, D. Bastos, A. Di Francesco, P. Faccioli, B. Galinhas, M. Gallinaro, J. Hollar, N. Leonardo, T. Niknejad, J. Seixas, K. Shchelina, G. Strong, O. Toldaiev, J. Varela

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

S. Afanasiev, P. Bunin, M. Gavrilenko, I. Golutvin, I. Gorbunov, A. Kamenev, V. Karjavine, A. Lanev, A. Malakhov, V. Matveev^{36,37}, P. Moisezenz, V. Palichik, V. Perelygin, M. Savina, S. Shmatov, S. Shulha, N. Skatchkov, V. Smirnov, N. Voytishin, A. Zarubin

Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, Dubna, Russia

L. Chtchipounov, V. Golovtsov, Y. Ivanov, V. Kim³⁸, E. Kuznetsova³⁹, P. Levchenko, V. Murzin, V. Oreshkin, I. Smirnov, D. Sosnov, V. Sulimov, L. Uvarov, A. Vorobyev

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

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

Institute for Nuclear Research, Moscow, Russia

V. Epshteyn, V. Gavrilov, N. Lychkovskaya, A. Nikitenko⁴⁰, V. Popov, I. Pozdnyakov, G. Safronov, A. Spiridonov, A. Stepenov, M. Toms, E. Vlasov, A. Zhokin

Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics named by A.I. Alikhanov of NRC 'Kurchatov Institute', Moscow, Russia

T. Aushev

Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, Moscow, Russia

M. Chadeeva⁴¹, P. Parygin, D. Philippov, E. Popova, V. Rusinov

National Research Nuclear University 'Moscow Engineering Physics Institute' (MEPhI), Moscow, Russia

V. Andreev, M. Azarkin, I. Dremin, M. Kirakosyan, A. Terkulov

P.N. Lebedev Physical Institute, Moscow, Russia

A. Baskakov, A. Belyaev, E. Boos, V. Bunichev, M. Dubinin⁴², L. Dudko, A. Ershov, V. Klyukhin, O. Kodolova, I. Lokhtin, S. Obraztsov, M. Perfilov, V. Savrin

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

A. Barnyakov⁴³, V. Blinov⁴³, T. Dimova⁴³, L. Kardapoltsev⁴³, Y. Skovpen⁴³

Novosibirsk State University (NSU), Novosibirsk, Russia

I. Azhgirey, I. Bayshev, S. Bitioukov, V. Kachanov, D. Konstantinov, P. Mandrik, V. Petrov, R. Ryutin, S. Slabospitskii, A. Sobol, S. Troshin, N. Tyurin, A. Uzunian, A. Volkov

Institute for High Energy Physics of National Research Centre 'Kurchatov Institute', Protvino, Russia

A. Babaev, A. Iuzhakov, V. Okhotnikov

National Research Tomsk Polytechnic University, Tomsk, Russia

V. Borchsh, V. Ivanchenko, E. Tcherniaev

Tomsk State University, Tomsk, Russia

P. Adzic⁴⁴, P. Cirkovic, M. Dordevic, P. Milenovic, J. Milosevic, M. Stojanovic

University of Belgrade: Faculty of Physics and VINCA Institute of Nuclear Sciences, Serbia

M. Aguilar-Benitez, J. Alcaraz Maestre, A. Álvarez Fernández, I. Bachiller, M. Barrio Luna, Cristina F. Bedoya, J.A. Brochero Cifuentes, C.A. Carrillo Montoya, M. Cepeda, M. Cerrada, N. Colino, B. De La Cruz, A. Delgado Peris, J.P. Fernández Ramos, J. Flix, M.C. Fouz, O. Gonzalez Lopez, S. Goy Lopez, J.M. Hernandez, M.I. Josa, D. Moran, Á. Navarro Tobar, A. Pérez-Calero Yzquierdo, J. Puerta Pelayo, I. Redondo, L. Romero, S. Sánchez Navas, M.S. Soares, A. Triossi, C. Willmott

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

C. Albajar, J.F. de Trocóniz, R. Reyes-Almanza

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid, Spain

B. Alvarez Gonzalez, J. Cuevas, C. Erice, J. Fernandez Menendez, S. Folgueras, I. Gonzalez Caballero, J.R. González Fernández, E. Palencia Cortezon, V. Rodríguez Bouza, S. Sanchez Cruz

Universidad de Oviedo, Instituto Universitario de Ciencias y Tecnologías Espaciales de Asturias (ICTEA), Oviedo, Spain

I.J. Cabrillo, A. Calderon, B. Chazin Quero, J. Duarte Campderros, M. Fernandez, P.J. Fernández Manteca, A. García Alonso, G. Gomez, C. Martinez Rivero, P. Martinez Ruiz del Arbol, F. Matorras, J. Piedra Gomez, C. Prieels, T. Rodrigo, A. Ruiz-Jimeno, L. Russo⁴⁵, L. Scodellaro, I. Vila, J.M. Vizan Garcia

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

K. Malagalage

University of Colombo, Colombo, Sri Lanka

W.G.D. Dharmaratna, N. Wickramage

University of Ruhuna, Department of Physics, Matara, Sri Lanka

D. Abbaneo, B. Akgun, E. Auffray, G. Auzinger, J. Baechler, P. Baillon, A.H. Ball, D. Barney, J. Bendavid, M. Bianco, A. Bocci, P. Bortignon, E. Bossini, C. Botta, E. Brondolin, T. Camporesi, A. Caratelli, G. Cerminara, E. Chapon, G. Cucciati, D. d'Enterria, A. Dabrowski, N. Daci, V. Daponte, A. David, O. Davignon, A. De Roeck, M. Deile, M. Dobson, M. Dünser, N. Dupont, A. Elliott-Peisert, N. Emriskova, F. Fallavollita⁴⁶, D. Fasanella, S. Fiorendi, G. Franzoni, J. Fulcher, W. Funk, S. Giani, D. Gigi, K. Gill, F. Glege, L. Gouskos, M. Gruchala, M. Guilbaud, D. Gulhan, J. Hegeman, C. Heidegger, Y. Iiyama, V. Innocente, T. James, P. Janot, O. Karacheban¹⁹, J. Kaspar, J. Kieseler, M. Krammer¹, N. Kratochwil, C. Lange, P. Lecoq, C. Lourenço, L. Malgeri, M. Mannelli, A. Massironi, F. Meijers, S. Mersi, E. Meschi, F. Moortgat, M. Mulders, J. Ngadiuba, J. Niedziela, S. Nourbakhsh, S. Orfanelli, L. Orsini, F. Pantaleo¹⁶, L. Pape, E. Perez, M. Peruzzi, A. Petrilli, G. Petrucciani, A. Pfeiffer, M. Pierini, F.M. Pitters, D. Rabady, A. Racz, M. Rieger, M. Rovere, H. Sakulin, J. Salfeld-Nebgen, C. Schäfer, C. Schwick, M. Selvaggi, A. Sharma, P. Silva, W. Snoeys, P. Sphicas⁴⁷, J. Steggemann, S. Summers, V.R. Tavolaro, D. Treille, A. Tsiros, G.P. Van Onsem, A. Vartak, M. Verzetti, W.D. Zeuner

CERN, European Organization for Nuclear Research, Geneva, Switzerland

L. Caminada⁴⁸, K. Deiters, W. Erdmann, R. Horisberger, Q. Ingram, H.C. Kaestli, D. Kotlinski, U. Langenegger, T. Rohe, S.A. Wiederkehr

Paul Scherrer Institut, Villigen, Switzerland

M. Backhaus, P. Berger, N. Chernyavskaya, G. Dissertori, M. Dittmar, M. Donegà, C. Dorfer, T.A. Gómez Espinosa, C. Grab, D. Hits, W. Lusterhmann, R.A. Manzoni, M.T. Meinhard, F. Micheli, P. Musella, F. Nessi-Tedaldi, F. Pauss, G. Perrin, L. Perrozzi, S. Pigazzini, M.G. Ratti, M. Reichmann, C. Reissel, T. Reitspiess, B. Ristic, D. Ruini, D.A. Sanz Becerra, M. Schönenberger, L. Shchutska, M.L. Vesterbacka Olsson, R. Wallny, D.H. Zhu

ETH Zurich – Institute for Particle Physics and Astrophysics (IPA), Zurich, Switzerland

T.K. Aarrestad, C. Amsler⁴⁹, D. Brzhechko, M.F. Canelli, A. De Cosa, R. Del Burgo, B. Kilminster, S. Leontsinis, V.M. Mikuni, I. Neutelings, G. Rauco, P. Robmann, K. Schweiger, C. Seitz, Y. Takahashi, S. Wertz, A. Zucchetta

Universität Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland

T.H. Doan, C.M. Kuo, W. Lin, A. Roy, S.S. Yu

National Central University, Chung-Li, Taiwan

P. Chang, Y. Chao, K.F. Chen, P.H. Chen, W.-S. Hou, Y.y. Li, R.-S. Lu, E. Paganis, A. Psallidas, A. Steen

National Taiwan University (NTU), Taipei, Taiwan

B. Asavapibhop, C. Asawatangtrakuldee, N. Srimanobhas, N. Suwonjandee

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

A. Bat, F. Boran, A. Celik⁵⁰, S. Cerci⁵¹, S. Damarseckin⁵², Z.S. Demiroglu, F. Dolek, C. Dozen⁵³, I. Dumanoglu, G. Gokbulut, EmineGurpinar Guler⁵⁴, Y. Guler, I. Hos⁵⁵, C. Isik, E.E. Kangal⁵⁶, O. Kara, A. Kayis Topaksu, U. Kiminsu, G. Onengut, K. Ozdemir⁵⁷, S. Ozturk⁵⁸, A.E. Simsek, D Sunar Cerci⁵¹, U.G. Tok, S. Turkcapar, I.S. Zorbakir, C. Zorbilmez

Çukurova University, Physics Department, Science and Art Faculty, Adana, Turkey

B. Isildak⁵⁹, G. Karapinar⁶⁰, M. Yalvac

Middle East Technical University, Physics Department, Ankara, Turkey

I.O. Atakisi, E. Gülmez, M. Kaya⁶¹, O. Kaya⁶², Ö. Özçelik, S. Tekten, E.A. Yetkin⁶³

Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey

A. Cakir, K. Cankocak, Y. Komurcu, S. Sen⁶⁴

Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey

B. Kaynak, S. Ozkorucuklu

Istanbul University, Istanbul, Turkey

B. Grynyov

Institute for Scintillation Materials of National Academy of Science of Ukraine, Kharkov, Ukraine

L. Levchuk

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

E. Bhal, S. Bologna, J.J. Brooke, D. Burns⁶⁵, E. Clement, D. Cussans, H. Flacher, J. Goldstein, G.P. Heath, H.F. Heath, L. Kreczko, B. Krikler, S. Paramesvaran, B. Penning, T. Sakuma, S. Seif El Nasr-Storey, V.J. Smith, J. Taylor, A. Titterton

University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom

K.W. Bell, A. Belyaev⁶⁶, C. Brew, R.M. Brown, D.J.A. Cockerill, J.A. Coughlan, K. Harder, S. Harper, J. Linacre, K. Manolopoulos, D.M. Newbold, E. Olaiya, D. Petyt, T. Reis, T. Schuh, C.H. Shepherd-Themistocleous, A. Thea, I.R. Tomalin, T. Williams, W.J. Womersley

Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Didcot, United Kingdom

R. Bainbridge, P. Bloch, J. Borg, S. Breeze, O. Buchmuller, A. Bundock, C.H.A.H.A.L. GurpreetSingh⁶⁷, D. Colling, P. Dauncey, G. Davies, M. Della Negra, R. Di Maria, P. Everaerts, G. Hall, G. Iles, M. Komm, L. Lyons, A.-M. Magnan, S. Malik, A. Martelli, V. Milosevic, A. Morton, J. Nash⁶⁸, V. Palladino, M. Pesaresi, D.M. Raymond, A. Richards, A. Rose, E. Scott, C. Seez, A. Shtipliyski, M. Stoye, T. Strebler, A. Tapper, K. Uchida, T. Virdee¹⁶, N. Wardle, D. Winterbottom, A.G. Zecchinelli, S.C. Zenz

Imperial College, London, United Kingdom

J.E. Cole, P.R. Hobson, A. Khan, P. Kyberd, C.K. Mackay, I.D. Reid, L. Teodorescu, S. Zahid

Brunel University, Uxbridge, United Kingdom

K. Call, B. Caraway, J. Dittmann, K. Hatakeyama, C. Madrid, B. McMaster, N. Pastika, C. Smith

Baylor University, Waco, USA

R. Bartek, A. Dominguez, R. Uniyal, A.M. Vargas Hernandez

Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, USA

A. Buccilli, S.I. Cooper, C. Henderson, P. Rumerio, C. West

The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, USA

A. Albert, D. Arcaro, Z. Demiragli, D. Gastler, C. Richardson, J. Rohlf, D. Sperka, I. Suarez, L. Sulak, D. Zou

Boston University, Boston, USA

G. Benelli, B. Burkle, X. Coubez¹⁷, D. Cutts, Y.t. Duh, M. Hadley, U. Heintz, J.M. Hogan⁶⁹, K.H.M. Kwok, E. Laird, G. Landsberg, K.T. Lau, J. Lee, M. Narain, S. Sagir⁷⁰, R. Syarif, E. Usai, W.Y. Wong, D. Yu, W. Zhang

Brown University, Providence, USA

R. Band, C. Brainerd, R. Breedon, M. Calderon De La Barca Sanchez, M. Chertok, J. Conway, R. Conway, P.T. Cox, R. Erbacher, C. Flores, G. Funk, F. Jensen, W. Ko[†], O. Kukral, R. Lander, M. Mulhearn, D. Pellett, J. Pilot, M. Shi, D. Taylor, K. Tos, M. Tripathi, Z. Wang, F. Zhang

University of California, Davis, Davis, USA

M. Bachtis, C. Bravo, R. Cousins, A. Dasgupta, A. Florent, J. Hauser, M. Ignatenko, N. Mccoll, W.A. Nash, S. Regnard, D. Saltzberg, C. Schnaible, B. Stone, V. Valuev

University of California, Los Angeles, USA

K. Burt, Y. Chen, R. Clare, J.W. Gary, S.M.A. Ghiasi Shirazi, G. Hanson, G. Karapostoli, O.R. Long, M. Olmedo Negrete, M.I. Paneva, W. Si, L. Wang, S. Wimpenny, B.R. Yates, Y. Zhang

University of California, Riverside, Riverside, USA

J.G. Branson, P. Chang, S. Cittolin, S. Cooperstein, N. Deelen, M. Derdzinski, R. Gerosa, D. Gilbert, B. Hashemi, D. Klein, V. Krutelyov, J. Letts, M. Masciovecchio, S. May, S. Padhi, M. Pieri, V. Sharma, M. Tadel, F. Würthwein, A. Yagil, G. Zevi Della Porta

University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, USA

N. Amin, R. Bhandari, C. Campagnari, M. Citron, V. Dutta, M. Franco Sevilla, J. Incandela, B. Marsh, H. Mei, A. Ovcharova, H. Qu, J. Richman, U. Sarica, D. Stuart, S. Wang

University of California, Santa Barbara – Department of Physics, Santa Barbara, USA

D. Anderson, A. Bornheim, O. Cerri, I. Dutta, J.M. Lawhorn, N. Lu, J. Mao, H.B. Newman, T.Q. Nguyen, J. Pata, M. Spiropulu, J.R. Vlimant, S. Xie, Z. Zhang, R.Y. Zhu

California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, USA

M.B. Andrews, T. Ferguson, T. Mudholkar, M. Paulini, M. Sun, I. Vorobiev, M. Weinberg

Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA

J.P. Cumalat, W.T. Ford, E. MacDonald, T. Mulholland, R. Patel, A. Perloff, K. Stenson, K.A. Ulmer, S.R. Wagner

University of Colorado Boulder, Boulder, USA

J. Alexander, Y. Cheng, J. Chu, A. Datta, A. Frankenthal, K. Mcdermott, J.R. Patterson, D. Quach, A. Ryd, S.M. Tan, Z. Tao, J. Thom, P. Wittich, M. Zientek

Cornell University, Ithaca, USA

S. Abdullin, M. Albrow, M. Alyari, G. Apollinari, A. Apresyan, A. Apyan, S. Banerjee, L.A.T. Bauerdick, A. Beretvas, D. Berry, J. Berryhill, P.C. Bhat, K. Burkett, J.N. Butler, A. Canepa, G.B. Cerati, H.W.K. Cheung, F. Chlebana, M. Cremonesi, J. Duarte, V.D. Elvira, J. Freeman, Z. Gecse, E. Gottschalk, L. Gray, D. Green, S. Grünendahl, O. Gutsche, Hall AllisonReinsvold, J. Hanlon, R.M. Harris, S. Hasegawa, R. Heller, J. Hirschauer, B. Jayatilaka, S. Jindariani, M. Johnson, U. Joshi, T. Klijnsma, B. Klima, M.J. Kortelainen, B. Kreis, S. Lammel, J. Lewis, D. Lincoln, R. Lipton, M. Liu, T. Liu, J. Lykken, K. Maeshima, J.M. Marraffino, D. Mason, P. McBride, P. Merkel, S. Mrenna, S. Nahn, V. O'Dell, V. Papadimitriou, K. Pedro, C. Pena, G. Rakness, F. Ravera, L. Ristori, B. Schneider, E. Sexton-Kennedy, N. Smith, A. Soha, W.J. Spalding, L. Spiegel, S. Stoynev, J. Strait, N. Strobbe, L. Taylor, S. Tkaczyk, N.V. Tran, L. Uplegger, E.W. Vaandering, C. Vernieri, R. Vidal, M. Wang, H.A. Weber

Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Batavia, USA

D. Acosta, P. Avery, D. Bourilkov, A. Brinkerhoff, L. Cadamuro, V. Cherepanov, F. Errico, R.D. Field, S.V. Gleyzer, D. Guerrero, B.M. Joshi, M. Kim, J. Konigsberg, A. Korytov, K.H. Lo, K. Matchev, N. Menendez, G. Mitselmakher, D. Rosenzweig, K. Shi, J. Wang, S. Wang, X. Zuo

University of Florida, Gainesville, USA

Y.R. Joshi

Florida International University, Miami, USA

T. Adams, A. Askew, S. Hagopian, V. Hagopian, K.F. Johnson, R. Khurana, T. Kolberg, G. Martinez, T. Perry, H. Prosper, C. Schiber, R. Yohay, J. Zhang

Florida State University, Tallahassee, USA

M.M. Baarmand, M. Hohlmann, D. Noonan, M. Rahmani, M. Saunders, F. Yumiceva

Florida Institute of Technology, Melbourne, USA

M.R. Adams, L. Apanasevich, R.R. Betts, R. Cavanaugh, X. Chen, S. Dittmer, O. Evdokimov, C.E. Gerber, D.A. Hangal, D.J. Hofman, C. Mills, T. Roy, M.B. Tonjes, N. Varelas, J. Viinikainen, H. Wang, X. Wang, Z. Wu

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

M. Alhusseini, B. Bilki⁵⁴, K. Dilsiz⁷¹, S. Durgut, R.P. Gandrajula, M. Haytmyradov, V. Khristenko, O.K. Köseyan, J.-P. Merlo, A. Mestvirishvili⁷², A. Moeller, J. Nachtman, H. Ogul⁷³, Y. Onel, F. Ozok⁷⁴, A. Penzo, C. Snyder, E. Tiras, J. Wetzel

The University of Iowa, Iowa City, USA

B. Blumenfeld, A. Cocoros, N. Eminizer, A.V. Gritsan, W.T. Hung, S. Kyriacou, P. Maksimovic, J. Roskes, M. Swartz

Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA

C. Baldenegro Barrera, P. Baringer, A. Bean, S. Boren, J. Bowen, A. Bylinkin, T. Isidori, S. Khalil, J. King, G. Krintiras, A. Kropivnitskaya, C. Lindsey, D. Majumder, W. Mcbrayer, N. Minafra, M. Murray, C. Rogan, C. Royon, S. Sanders, E. Schmitz, J.D. Tapia Takaki, Q. Wang, J. Williams, G. Wilson

The University of Kansas, Lawrence, USA

S. Duric, A. Ivanov, K. Kaadze, D. Kim, Y. Maravin, D.R. Mendis, T. Mitchell, A. Modak, A. Mohammadi

Kansas State University, Manhattan, USA

F. Rebassoo, D. Wright

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, USA

A. Baden, O. Baron, A. Belloni, S.C. Eno, Y. Feng, N.J. Hadley, S. Jabeen, G.Y. Jeng, R.G. Kellogg, A.C. Mignerey, S. Nabili, F. Ricci-Tam, M. Seidel, Y.H. Shin, A. Skuja, S.C. Tonwar, K. Wong

University of Maryland, College Park, USA

D. Abercrombie, B. Allen, A. Baty, R. Bi, S. Brandt, W. Busza, I.A. Cali, M. D'Alfonso, G. Gomez Ceballos, M. Goncharov, P. Harris, D. Hsu, M. Hu, M. Klute, D. Kovalskyi, Y.-J. Lee, P.D. Luckey, B. Maier, A.C. Marini, C. Mcginn, C. Mironov, S. Narayanan, X. Niu, C. Paus, D. Rankin, C. Roland, G. Roland, Z. Shi, G.S.F. Stephens, K. Sumorok, K. Tatar, D. Velicanu, J. Wang, T.W. Wang, B. Wyslouch

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, USA

R.M. Chatterjee, A. Evans, S. Guts[†], P. Hansen, J. Hiltbrand, Sh. Jain, Y. Kubota, Z. Lesko, J. Mans, M. Revering, R. Rusack, R. Saradhy, N. Schroeder, M.A. Wadud

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA

J.G. Acosta, S. Oliveros

University of Mississippi, Oxford, USA

K. Bloom, S. Chauhan, D.R. Claes, C. Fangmeier, L. Finco, F. Golf, R. Kamalieddin, I. Kravchenko, J.E. Siado, G.R. Snow[†], B. Stieger, W. Tabb

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, USA

G. Agarwal, C. Harrington, I. Iashvili, A. Kharchilava, C. McLean, D. Nguyen, A. Parker, J. Pekkanen, S. Rappoccio, B. Roozbahani

State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, USA

G. Alverson, E. Barberis, C. Freer, Y. Haddad, A. Hortiangtham, G. Madigan, B. Marzocchi, D.M. Morse, T. Orimoto, L. Skinnari, A. Tishelman-Charny, T. Wamorkar, B. Wang, A. Wisecarver, D. Wood

Northeastern University, Boston, USA

S. Bhattacharya, J. Bueghly, A. Gilbert, T. Gunter, K.A. Hahn, N. Odell, M.H. Schmitt, K. Sung, M. Trovato, M. Velasco

Northwestern University, Evanston, USA

R. Bucci, N. Dev, R. Goldouzian, M. Hildreth, K. Hurtado Anampa, C. Jessop, D.J. Karmgard, K. Lannon, W. Li, N. Loukas, N. Marinelli, I. Mcalister, F. Meng, Y. Musienko³⁶, R. Ruchti, P. Siddireddy, G. Smith, S. Taroni, M. Wayne, A. Wightman, M. Wolf, A. Woodard

University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, USA

J. Alimena, B. Bylsma, L.S. Durkin, B. Francis, C. Hill, W. Ji, A. Lefeld, T.Y. Ling, B.L. Winer

The Ohio State University, Columbus, USA

G. Dezoort, P. Elmer, J. Hardenbrook, N. Haubrich, S. Higginbotham, A. Kalogeropoulos, S. Kwan, D. Lange, M.T. Lucchini, J. Luo, D. Marlow, K. Mei, I. Ojalvo, J. Olsen, C. Palmer, P. Piroué, D. Stickland, C. Tully

Princeton University, Princeton, USA

S. Malik, S. Norberg

University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez, USA

A. Barker, V.E. Barnes, S. Das, L. Gutay, M. Jones, A.W. Jung, A. Khatiwada, B. Mahakud, D.H. Miller, G. Negro, N. Neumeister, C.C. Peng, S. Piperov, H. Qiu, J.F. Schulte, N. Trevisani, F. Wang, R. Xiao, W. Xie

Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA

T. Cheng, J. Dolen, N. Parashar

Purdue University Northwest, Hammond, USA

U. Behrens, K.M. Ecklund, S. Freed, F.J.M. Geurts, M. Kilpatrick, Arun Kumar, W. Li, B.P. Padley, R. Redjimi, J. Roberts, J. Rorie, W. Shi, A.G. Stahl Leitner, Z. Tu, A. Zhang

Rice University, Houston, USA

A. Bodek, P. de Barbaro, R. Demina, J.L. Dulemba, C. Fallon, T. Ferbel, M. Galanti, A. Garcia-Bellido, O. Hindrichs, A. Khukhunaishvili, E. Ranken, R. Taus

University of Rochester, Rochester, USA

B. Chiarito, J.P. Chou, A. Gandrakota, Y. Gershtein, E. Halkiadakis, A. Hart, M. Heindl, E. Hughes, S. Kaplan, I. Laflotte, A. Lath, R. Montalvo, K. Nash, M. Osherson, H. Saka, S. Salur, S. Schnetzer, S. Somalwar, R. Stone, S. Thomas

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

H. Acharya, A.G. Delannoy, S. Spanier

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA

O. Bouhali⁷⁵, M. Dalchenko, M. De Mattia, A. Delgado, S. Dildick, R. Eusebi, J. Gilmore, T. Huang, T. Kamon⁷⁶, H. Kim, S. Luo, S. Malhotra, D. Marley, R. Mueller, D. Overton, L. Perniè, D. Rathjens, A. Safonov

Texas A&M University, College Station, USA

N. Akchurin, J. Damgov, F. De Guio, V. Hegde, S. Kunori, K. Lamichhane, S.W. Lee, T. Mengke, S. Muthumuni, T. Peltola, S. Undleeb, I. Volobouev, Z. Wang, A. Whitbeck

Texas Tech University, Lubbock, USA

S. Greene, A. Gurrola, R. Janjam, W. Johns, C. Maguire, A. Melo, H. Ni, K. Padeken, F. Romeo, P. Sheldon, S. Tuo, J. Velkovska, M. Verweij

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, USA

M.W. Arenton, P. Barria, B. Cox, G. Cummings, J. Hakala, R. Hirosky, M. Joyce, A. Ledovskoy, C. Neu, B. Tannenwald, Y. Wang, E. Wolfe, F. Xia

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA

R. Harr, P.E. Karchin, N. Poudyal, J. Sturdy, P. Thapa

Wayne State University, Detroit, USA

T. Bose, J. Buchanan, C. Caillol, D. Carlsmith, S. Dasu, I. De Bruyn, L. Dodd, C. Galloni, H. He, M. Herndon, A. Hervé, U. Hussain, A. Lanaro, A. Loeliger, K. Long, R. Loveless, J. Madhusudanan Sreekala, D. Pinna, T. Ruggles, A. Savin, V. Sharma, W.H. Smith, D. Teague, S. Trembath-reichert

University of Wisconsin – Madison, Madison, WI, USA

† Deceased.

- ¹ Also at Vienna University of Technology, Vienna, Austria.
- ² Also at IRFU, CEA, Université Paris-Saclay, Gif-sur-Yvette, France.
- ³ Also at Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Campinas, Brazil.
- ⁴ Also at Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil.
- ⁵ Also at UFMS, Nova Andradina, Brazil.
- ⁶ Also at Universidade Federal de Pelotas, Pelotas, Brazil.
- ⁷ Also at Université Libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, Belgium.
- ⁸ Also at University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China.
- ⁹ Also at Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics named by A.I. Alikhanov of NRC 'Kurchatov Institute', Moscow, Russia.
- ¹⁰ Also at Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, Dubna, Russia.
- ¹¹ Also at Suez University, Suez, Egypt.
- ¹² Now at British University in Egypt, Cairo, Egypt.
- ¹³ Also at Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA.
- ¹⁴ Also at Université de Haute Alsace, Mulhouse, France.
- ¹⁵ Also at Erzincan Binali Yildirim University, Erzincan, Turkey.
- ¹⁶ Also at CERN, European Organization for Nuclear Research, Geneva, Switzerland.
- ¹⁷ Also at RWTH Aachen University, III. Physikalisches Institut A, Aachen, Germany.
- ¹⁸ Also at University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany.
- ¹⁹ Also at Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus, Germany.
- ²⁰ Also at Institute of Physics, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary, Debrecen, Hungary.
- ²¹ Also at Institute of Nuclear Research ATOMKI, Debrecen, Hungary.
- ²² Also at IIT Bhubaneswar, Bhubaneswar, India, Bhubaneswar, India.
- ²³ Also at Institute of Physics, Bhubaneswar, India.
- ²⁴ Also at Shoolini University, Solan, India.
- ²⁵ Also at University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India.
- ²⁶ Also at University of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, India.
- ²⁷ Also at Isfahan University of Technology, Isfahan, Iran.
- ²⁸ Now at INFN Sezione di Bari ^a, Università di Bari ^b, Politecnico di Bari ^c, Bari, Italy.
- ²⁹ Also at Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development, Bologna, Italy.
- ³⁰ Also at Centro Siciliano di Fisica Nucleare e di Struttura Della Materia, Catania, Italy.
- ³¹ Also at Scuola Normale e Sezione dell'INFN, Pisa, Italy.
- ³² Also at Riga Technical University, Riga, Latvia, Riga, Latvia.
- ³³ Also at Malaysian Nuclear Agency, MOSTI, Kajang, Malaysia.
- ³⁴ Also at Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, Mexico City, Mexico.
- ³⁵ Also at Warsaw University of Technology, Institute of Electronic Systems, Warsaw, Poland.
- ³⁶ Also at Institute for Nuclear Research, Moscow, Russia.
- ³⁷ Now at National Research Nuclear University 'Moscow Engineering Physics Institute' (MEPhI), Moscow, Russia.
- ³⁸ Also at St. Petersburg State Polytechnical University, St. Petersburg, Russia.
- ³⁹ Also at University of Florida, Gainesville, USA.
- ⁴⁰ Also at Imperial College, London, United Kingdom.
- ⁴¹ Also at P.N. Lebedev Physical Institute, Moscow, Russia.
- ⁴² Also at California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, USA.
- ⁴³ Also at Budker Institute of Nuclear Physics, Novosibirsk, Russia.
- ⁴⁴ Also at Faculty of Physics, University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia.
- ⁴⁵ Also at Università degli Studi di Siena, Siena, Italy.
- ⁴⁶ Also at INFN Sezione di Pavia ^a, Università di Pavia ^b, Pavia, Italy, Pavia, Italy.
- ⁴⁷ Also at National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens, Greece.
- ⁴⁸ Also at Universität Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland.
- ⁴⁹ Also at Stefan Meyer Institute for Subatomic Physics, Vienna, Austria, Vienna, Austria.
- ⁵⁰ Also at Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, BURDUR, Turkey.
- ⁵¹ Also at Adiyaman University, Adiyaman, Turkey.
- ⁵² Also at Şırnak University, Şırnak, Turkey.
- ⁵³ Also at Department of Physics, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, Beijing, China.
- ⁵⁴ Also at Beykent University, Istanbul, Turkey, Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁵⁵ Also at Istanbul Aydin University, Application and Research Center for Advanced Studies (App. & Res. Cent. for Advanced Studies), Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁵⁶ Also at Mersin University, Mersin, Turkey.
- ⁵⁷ Also at Piri Reis University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁵⁸ Also at Gaziosmanpasa University, Tokat, Turkey.
- ⁵⁹ Also at Ozyegin University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁶⁰ Also at Izmir Institute of Technology, Izmir, Turkey.
- ⁶¹ Also at Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- ⁶² Also at Kafkas University, Kars, Turkey.
- ⁶³ Also at Istanbul Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey.

⁶⁴ Also at Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey.

⁶⁵ Also at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussel, Belgium.

⁶⁶ Also at School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom.

⁶⁷ Also at IPPP Durham University, Durham, United Kingdom.

⁶⁸ Also at Monash University, Faculty of Science, Clayton, Australia.

⁶⁹ Also at Bethel University, St. Paul, Minneapolis, USA, St. Paul, USA.

⁷⁰ Also at Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University, Karaman, Turkey.

⁷¹ Also at Bingol University, Bingol, Turkey.

⁷² Also at Georgian Technical University, Tbilisi, Georgia.

⁷³ Also at Sinop University, Sinop, Turkey.

⁷⁴ Also at Mimar Sinan University, Istanbul, Istanbul, Turkey.

⁷⁵ Also at Texas A&M University at Qatar, Doha, Qatar.

⁷⁶ Also at Kyungpook National University, Daegu, Korea.