



VBF Higgs production in the structure function approach and beyond

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Future challenges for precision QCD 25 October 2016

Based on [PRL115\(082002\)](#) and [PRL117\(072001\)](#) in collaboration with

Matteo Cacciari, Frédéric Dreyer, Gavin Salam & Giulia Zanderighi.

This work

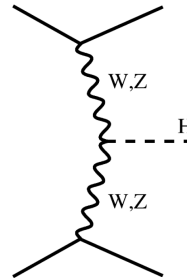
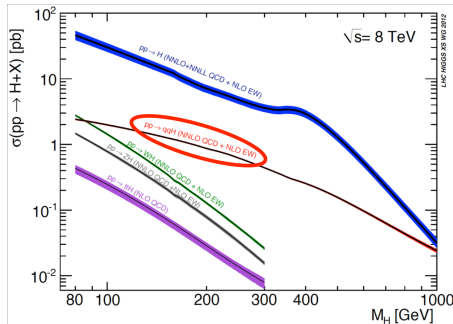
- first semi-differential N³LO calculation of VBF Higgs production in the **structure function approach**
- first fully differential NNLO calculation of VBF Higgs production using a novel **“projection-to-Born”** method

What to expect

- N³LO corrections are at the permille level and well within the scale uncertainty band of the NNLO prediction
- the associated scale uncertainty is reduced by a factor 5 at N³LO
- NNLO corrections are sizeable, $\mathcal{O}(10\%)$, and outside NLO band
- the corrections are (almost everywhere) negative
- only moderate shrinkage of NNLO bands compared to NLO bands
- the **“projection-to-Born”** method is quite general and can be extended to other similar processes



Reasons to study VBF



- **largest cross section at tree-level** and second-largest of all channels
- distinct signature of two forward jets
- **tagging** reduces backgrounds (eg $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$)
- non-zero Higgs transverse momentum at lowest order
- sensitive to CP properties of the Higgs through correlation of forward jets
- sensitive to trilinear Higgs self-coupling through loop-corrections



Reasons to study VBF

Production process	ATLAS+CMS	ATLAS	CMS
μ_{ggF}	$1.03^{+0.17}_{-0.15}$	$1.25^{+0.24}_{-0.21}$	$0.84^{+0.19}_{-0.16}$
μ_{VBF}	$1.18^{+0.25}_{-0.23}$	$1.21^{+0.33}_{-0.30}$	$1.13^{+0.37}_{-0.34}$
μ_{WH}	$0.88^{+0.40}_{-0.38}$	$1.25^{+0.56}_{-0.52}$	$0.46^{+0.57}_{-0.54}$
μ_{ZH}	$0.80^{+0.39}_{-0.36}$	$0.30^{+0.51}_{-0.46}$	$1.35^{+0.58}_{-0.54}$
μ_{ttH}	$2.3^{+0.7}_{-0.6}$	$1.9^{+0.8}_{-0.7}$	$2.9^{+1.0}_{-0.9}$

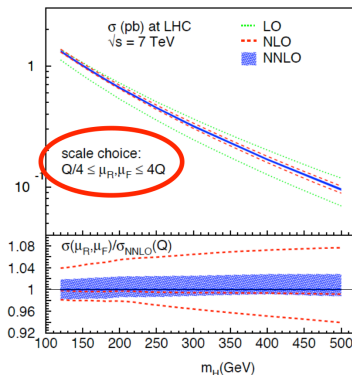
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Inclusive NNLO VBF Higgs Production

Until recently VBF Higgs production was only known inclusively at NNLO.

[Bolzoni et al. (2010)]



- the calculation suggests **tiny** renormalisation and factorisation scale variations ($\sim 1 - 2\%$)
- NNLO results well within NLO band
- result obtained in the **structure function approach**

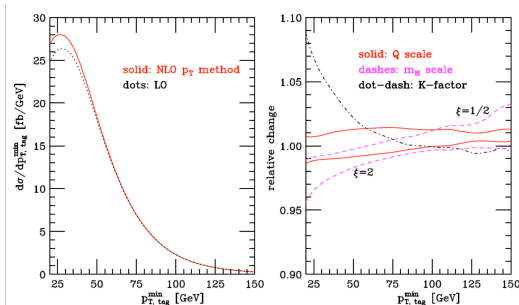
No cuts can be applied to the calculation, as it is **totally inclusive over hadronic final states** with the same vector boson momenta.



Exclusive NLO VBF Higgs Production

To enable the application of **realistic VBF cuts** one has to be fully differential. **Until recently** differential VBF Higgs production was known to **NLO(+PS)**.

[Figy, Oleari, Zeppenfeld (2003)]



Calculation suggests small uncertainties from missing higher order corrections ($\sim 2\%$).



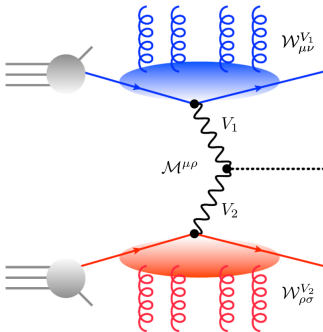
Structure Function Approach

One can think of VBF Higgs production as a double Deep Inelastic Scattering ($\text{DIS} \times \text{DIS}$) with no cross-talk between the upper and lower sectors.

[Han, Valencia, Willenbrock (1992)]

- this picture is accurate to more than 1%

[Bolzoni et al. (2012)], [Ciccolini, Denner, Dittmaier (2008)], [Harlander et al. (2008)], [Andersen et al. (2008)]



- the factorisation of the two sectors is exact if one imagines two copies of QCD, QCD_1 and QCD_2 , respectively for the upper and lower sectors.
- all DIS coefficients are known to N^3LO .
- as the DIS coefficients are inclusive over the hadronic final state, **the calculation cannot provide differential results.**

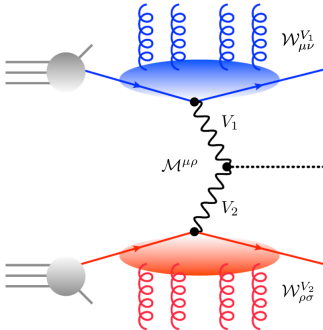


Structure Function Approach

$$d\sigma_{\text{VBF}} = \frac{G_F^2}{s} M_{V_1}^2 M_{V_2}^2 \Delta_{V_1}^2(Q_1^2) \Delta_{V_2}^2(Q_2^2) \times \\ \mathcal{W}_{\mu\nu}^{V_1}(x_1, Q_1^2) \mathcal{M}^{\mu\rho} \mathcal{M}^{*\nu\sigma} \mathcal{W}_{\rho\sigma}^{V_2}(x_2, Q_2^2) d\Omega_{\text{VBF}}$$

and

$$\mathcal{M}^{\mu\nu} = 2\sqrt{\sqrt{2}G_F} M_V^2 g^{\mu\nu}$$



Hadronic Tensor

$$\mathcal{W}_{\mu\nu}^V(x_i, Q_i^2) = \\ \left(-g_{\mu\nu} + \frac{q_{i,\mu} q_{i,\nu}}{q_i^2} \right) F_1^V(x_i, Q_i^2) \\ + \frac{\hat{p}_{i,\mu} \hat{p}_{i,\nu}}{P_i \cdot q_i} F_2^V(x_i, Q_i^2) \\ + i\epsilon_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \frac{P_i^\rho q_i^\sigma}{2P_i \cdot q_i} F_3^V(x_i, Q_i^2)$$



Structure Function Approach

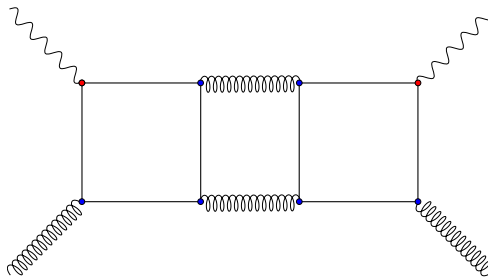
The Structure Functions can be expressed as convolutions of the short distance DIS coefficient functions and PDFs

$$F_i^V = \sum_{\alpha=q,g} C_{i,\alpha}^V \otimes f_\alpha, \quad i=2,L,3, \quad V=Z,W^+,W^-,$$

where DIS coefficient functions are known to the third order in

α_s . [Moch, Rogal, Vermaseren, Vogt (2005-2008)]

Conceptually N³LO not more complicated than NNLO, but non-trivial flavour structures start appearing at N³LO



What about missing N³LO PDFs?

All approximations aside, we can't truly claim N³LO accuracy without also having N³LO PDFs available.

Naive estimate

$$\delta_A^{\text{PDF}} = \frac{1}{2} \left| \frac{\sigma_{\text{NNLO-PDF}}^{\text{NNLO}} - \sigma_{\text{NLO-PDF}}^{\text{NNLO}}}{\sigma_{\text{NNLO-PDF}}^{\text{NNLO}}} \right| = 1.1\%,$$

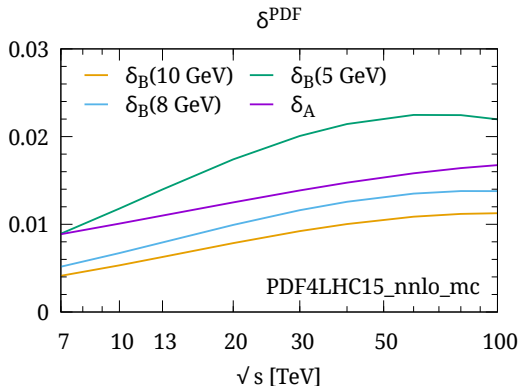
and slightly more sophisticated ($Q_0 = 8 \text{ GeV}$)

$$f^{\text{N}^3\text{LO,approx.}}(x, Q) = f^{\text{NNLO}}(x, Q) \frac{F_2^{\text{NNLO}}(x, Q_0)}{F_2^{\text{N}^3\text{LO}}(x, Q_0)},$$

$$\delta_B^{\text{PDF}}(Q_0) = \left| \frac{\sigma^{\text{N}^3\text{LO}} - \sigma_{\text{rescaled}}^{\text{N}^3\text{LO}}(Q_0)}{\sigma^{\text{N}^3\text{LO}}} \right| = 7.9\%.$$



What about missing N³LO PDFs?



- the value of $Q_0 = 8 \text{ GeV}$ is found by requiring that the method is reliable in estimating NNLO corrections to PDFs
 - the uncertainty associated with varying the scale in the DGLAP evolutions is found to be below the permille level
- could obtain approximate N³LO PDFs using just N³LO coefficient functions



Scale variations at N³LO

We use RGE methods to evaluate the structure functions at arbitrary renormalisation scales

$$\alpha_S(Q) = \alpha_S(\mu_R) + \alpha_S^2(\mu_R)\beta_0 L_{RQ} + \alpha_S^3(\mu_R)(\beta_0^2 L_{RQ}^2 + \beta_1 L_{RQ}) + \mathcal{O}(\alpha_S^4(\mu_R))$$

$$L_{RQ} = \ln\left(\frac{\mu_R^2}{Q^2}\right), \quad L_{FQ} = \ln\left(\frac{\mu_F^2}{Q^2}\right)$$

$$\begin{aligned} C_i &= \sum_{k=0} \left(\frac{\alpha_S(Q)}{2\pi} \right)^k C_i^{(k)} = \\ &C_i^{(0)} + \frac{\alpha_S(\mu_R)}{2\pi} C_i^{(1)} + \\ &\left(\frac{\alpha_S(\mu_R)}{2\pi} \right)^2 \left(C_i^{(2)} + 2\pi\beta_0 C_i^{(1)} L_{RQ} \right) + \\ &\left(\frac{\alpha_S(\mu_R)}{2\pi} \right)^3 \left[C_i^{(3)} + 4\pi\beta_0 C_i^{(2)} L_{RQ} \right. \\ &\left. + 4\pi^2 C_i^{(1)} L_{RQ} (\beta_1 + \beta_0^2 L_{RQ}) \right] + \mathcal{O}(\alpha_S^4) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} f(x, Q) &= f(x, \mu_F) \left(1 - \frac{\alpha_S(\mu_R)}{2\pi} L_{FQ} P^{(0)} \right. \\ &- \left(\frac{\alpha_S(\mu_R)}{2\pi} \right)^2 L_{FQ} \left[P^{(1)} - \frac{1}{2} L_{FQ} (P^{(0)})^2 \right. \\ &- \left. \pi\beta_0 P^{(0)} (L_{FQ} - 2L_{RQ}) \right] \\ &- \left(\frac{\alpha_S(\mu_R)}{2\pi} \right)^3 L_{FQ} \left[P^{(2)} - \frac{1}{2} L_{FQ} (P^{(0)} P^{(1)} \right. \\ &+ P^{(1)} P^{(0)}) + \pi\beta_0 (L_{FQ} - 2L_{RQ}) \times \\ &(L_{FQ} (P^{(0)})^2 - 2P^{(1)}) + \frac{1}{6} L_{FQ}^2 (P^{(0)})^3 \\ &+ 4\pi^2 \beta_0^2 P^{(0)} (L_{RQ}^2 - L_{FQ} L_{RQ} + \frac{1}{3} L_{FQ}^2) \\ &- \left. \left. 2\pi^2 \beta_1 P^{(0)} (L_{FQ} - 2L_{RQ}) \right] + \mathcal{O}(\alpha_S^4) \right) \end{aligned}$$



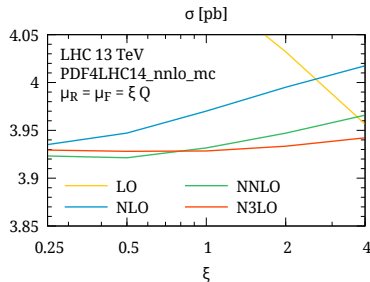
N³LO results

	$\sigma^{(13 \text{ TeV})} [\text{pb}]$	$\sigma^{(14 \text{ TeV})} [\text{pb}]$	$\sigma^{(100 \text{ TeV})} [\text{pb}]$
LO	$4.099^{+0.051}_{-0.067}$	$4.647^{+0.037}_{-0.058}$	$77.17^{+6.45}_{-7.29}$
NLO	$3.970^{+0.025}_{-0.023}$	$4.497^{+0.032}_{-0.027}$	$73.90^{+1.73}_{-1.94}$
NNLO	$3.932^{+0.015}_{-0.010}$	$4.452^{+0.018}_{-0.012}$	$72.44^{+0.53}_{-0.40}$
N ³ LO	$3.928^{+0.005}_{-0.001}$	$4.448^{+0.006}_{-0.001}$	$72.34^{+0.11}_{-0.02}$

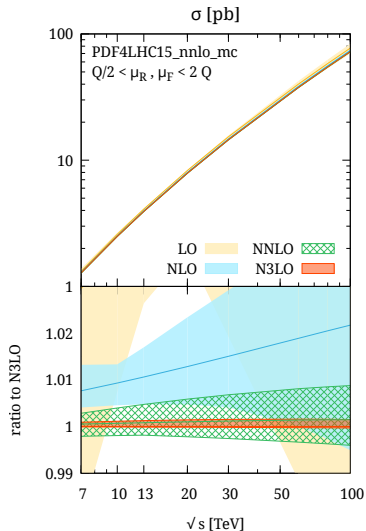
- We study pp collisions with PDF4LHC_nnlo_mc and electroweak parameters fixed to their PDG values
- the central renormalisation and factorisation scale is set equal to Q_1, Q_2 and varied independently by a factor 2 up and down
- N³LO corrections are tiny ($\sim 2\%$) but predictions well within NNLO scale uncertainty



N³LO results

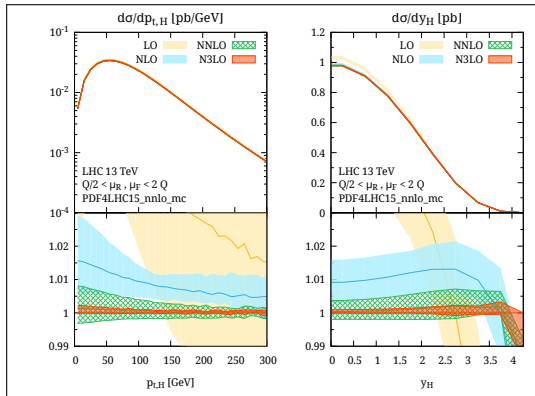


- the N³LO corrections are tiny over a large range of energies and stay well within the scale uncertainty band of the NNLO prediction
- cross section becomes extremely stable under the variation of renormalisation and factorisation scales



N³LO results

From the knowledge of Q_1 and Q_2 it is trivial to reconstruct the momentum of the Higgs. The calculation is therefore fully differential in the Higgs kinematics.



- the corrections are almost flat throughout the entire spectrum
- the N³LO prediction completely contained within the scale uncertainty band of the NNLO prediction
- only differential in the momenta of the proton remnants, and hence no real information on the tagging jets



Limitations of the structure function approach

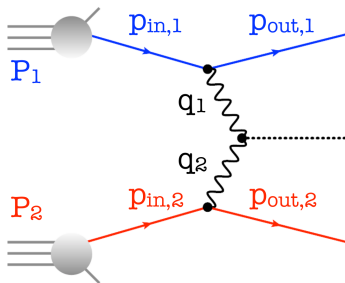
- gluon exchanges between the upper and lower hadronic sectors, which appear at NNLO, but are kinematically and colour suppressed; These contributions along with the heavy-quark loop induced contributions have been estimated to contribute at the permille level [Bolzoni et al. (2012)]
- t-/u-channel interference which are known to contribute $\mathcal{O}(5\text{‰})$ at the fully inclusive level and $\mathcal{O}(0.5\text{‰})$ after VBF cuts have been applied [Ciccolini, Denner, Dittmaier (2008)]
- contributions from s-channel production, which have been calculated up to NLO. At the inclusive level these contributions are sizeable but they are reduced to $\mathcal{O}(5\text{‰})$ after VBF cuts [Ciccolini, Denner, Dittmaier (2008)]
- single-quark line contributions, which contribute to the VBF cross section at NNLO. At the fully inclusive level these amount to corrections of $\mathcal{O}(1\%)$ but are reduced to the permille level after VBF cuts have been applied [Harlander et al. (2008)]
- loop induced interference between VBF and ggH production. These contributions have been shown to be much below the permille level [Andersen et al. (2008)]



Beyond the Structure Function Approach

This work: We eliminate the limitations of the Structure Function Approach.

If the scattering is Born like, then the vector boson momenta q_i , and on-shell conditions, fix the incoming and outgoing parton momenta:



$$p_{in,i} = x_i P_i$$

$$p_{out,i} = x_i P_i - q_i$$

$$x_i = \frac{q_i^2}{2q_i P_i}$$

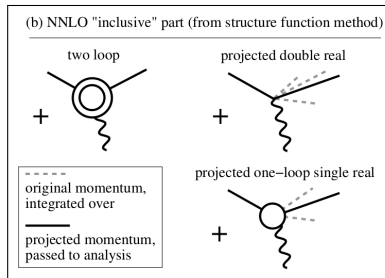


Beyond the Structure Function Approach

The calculation is based on **two ingredients**:

1. An “inclusive” contribution

- use the Structure Function Approach and use four-vectors q_1, q_2 to assign Born-like kinematics using the equations below
- use the projected Born-like momenta to compute differential distributions



$$p_{in,i} = x_i P_i$$

$$p_{out,i} = x_i P_i - q_i$$

$$x_i = \frac{q_i^2}{2q_i P_i}$$



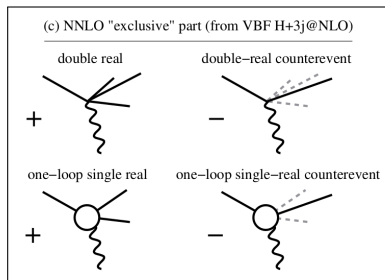
Beyond the Structure Function Approach

The calculation is based on **two ingredients**:

2. An “exclusive” contribution

- use the electroweak $H+jj$ NLO calculation in the factorized approximation

[Figy et al. (2007)], [Jäger et al. (2014)]



- for each parton, keep track of whether it belongs to the upper or lower sector, and compute vector-boson momenta
- for each event add **counter-event with projected Born kinematics** and opposite weight

The counter-events **cancel** identically with the projected terms from the “inclusive” contribution.



Beyond the Structure Function Approach

Schematically we express the “projection-to-Born” (P2B) method as

$$\begin{aligned}
 d\sigma &= \int d\Phi_B (B + V) + \int d\Phi_R R \\
 &= \underbrace{\int d\Phi_B (B + V) + \int d\Phi_R R_{P2B}}_{\text{“inclusive” contribution}} + \underbrace{\int d\Phi_R R - \int d\Phi_R R_{P2B}}_{\text{“exclusive” contribution}}
 \end{aligned}$$

- from the “exclusive” ingredient we get the full double-real and one-loop single-real contributions.
- when integrated over phase-space, the counter-events cancel the projected double-real and one-loop single-real contributions from the “inclusive” ingredient

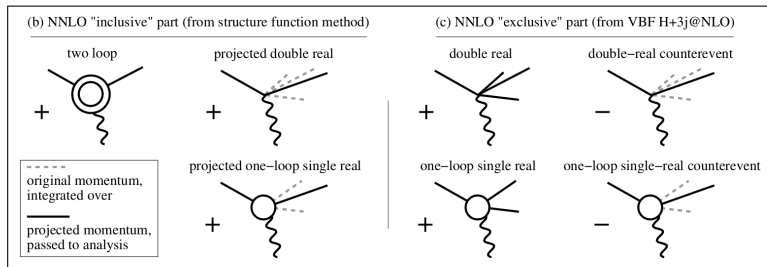
Hence the sum of the two contributions gives the complete, **fully differential** NNLO result.



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 \end{aligned}$$



Implementation

1. “inclusive” code

- matrix elements coded with structure functions using parametrised versions of the DIS coefficient functions evaluated by HOPPET
- phase-space taken from POWHEG’s VBF_H generator

2. “exclusive” code

- start with the VBF_HJJJ calculation in POWHEG (based on vbfno)
- extend POWHEG’s tags to uniquely associate radiation with each sector (upper or lower line)
- for each event map the kinematics onto Born-like kinematics and determine the vector-boson momenta q_1, q_2 using the equations on p.7.

- we have tested the “inclusive” code against a private version of the structure function calculation (thanks to Marco Zaro) and the structure functions themselves against APFEL 2.4.1.
- we have tested that the “exclusive” code reproduces the original VBF_HJJJ result. The sum of “inclusive” and “exclusive” at NLO agrees with VBF_H
- tagging tested by checking that the probability of assigning a parton to the wrong sector decreases as the rapidity between the two hardest jets increases



Phenomenology

We study 13 TeV LHC collisions with $M_H = 125$ GeV and NNPDF3.0_nnlo_as118. We use the following VBF cuts:

- Jets defined with anti- k_t , $R = 0.4$ and $p_t > 25$ GeV
- Two hardest jets within $|y| < 4.5$
- High dijet invariant mass, $M_{j_1 j_2} > 600$ GeV, and separation, $\Delta y_{j_1 j_2} > 4.5$
- Hardest jets in opposite hemispheres, $y_{j_1} y_{j_2} < 0$

We choose a central scale which approximates well $\sqrt{Q_1 Q_2}$ and symmetrically vary by a factor 2 up and down

$$\mu_0^2(p_{t,H}) = \frac{M_H}{2} \sqrt{\left(\frac{M_H}{2}\right)^2 + p_{t,H}^2}$$



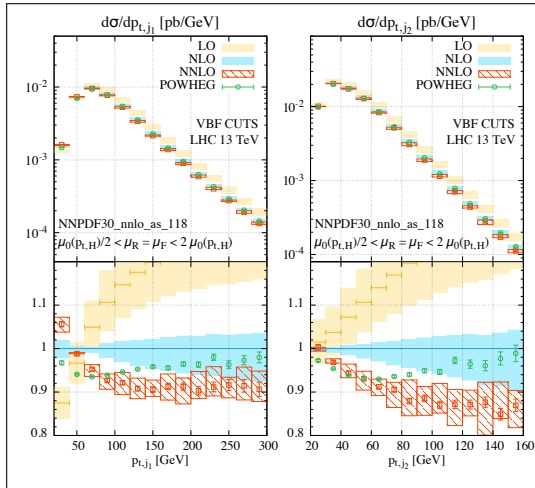
Phenomenology

	$\sigma^{(\text{no cuts})} [\text{pb}]$	$\sigma^{(\text{VBF cuts})} [\text{pb}]$
LO	$4.032^{+0.057}_{-0.069}$	$0.957^{+0.066}_{-0.059}$
NLO	$3.929^{+0.024}_{-0.023}$	$0.876^{+0.008}_{-0.018}$
NNLO	$3.888^{+0.016}_{-0.012}$	$0.826^{+0.013}_{-0.014}$

- NNLO corrections tiny ($\sim 1\%$) without cuts and sizeable with VBF cuts ($\sim 5\%$)
- NNLO results outside NLO band (also true when using NLO PDFs)
- corrections tend to be dominated by the extra real radiation. The effect is softer jets and hence fewer events pass the cuts



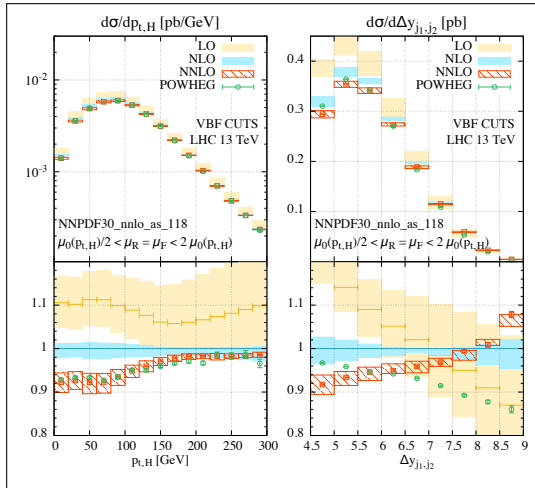
Phenomenology



- NNLO corrections can be **large** $\mathcal{O}(10\%)$ and are often outside the NLO band
- the NNLO corrections tend to be dominated by extra real radiation. These appear to make the **jets softer**
- NOTE: NNLO PDF used everywhere. Similar results hold when using LO/NLO PDFs
- expanding the scale variation from 3-point to 7-point doesn't change the size of the NLO bands noticeably



More Phenomenology



- in some cases **NLO+PS agrees very well with the NNLO result** (in particular $p_{t,H}$, M_{jj} and ϕ_{jj})
- in some cases **not** ($\Delta y_{j1,j2}$ and H_t)
- in general only modest shrinkage of bands from NLO to NNLO
- **non-trivial** kinematic dependence on **k-factors** (both LO/NLO and NNLO/NLO)



LHCHXWG YR4 results

We study LHC collisions with $M_H = 125$ GeV and PDF4LHC15_nnlo_100. We use the following setup:

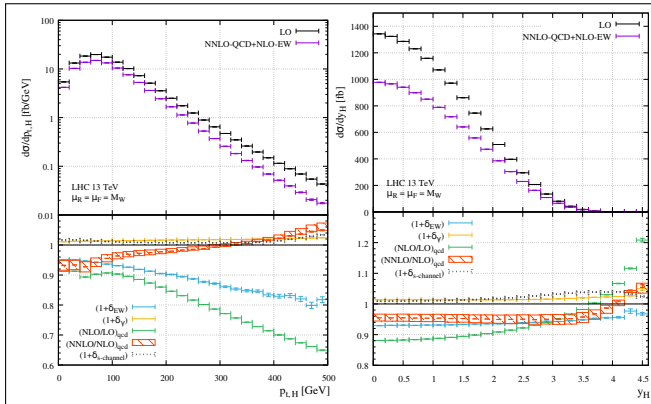
- Jets defined with anti- k_t , $R = 0.4$ and $p_t > 20$ GeV
- Two hardest jets within $|\eta| < 5$
- Dijet invariant mass, $M_{j_1 j_2} > 130$ GeV, and separation, $\Delta y_{j_1 j_2} > 3$
- $\mu_R = \mu_F = M_W$ (varied a factor 2 up and down)
- Electroweak corrections obtained with HAWK [Ciccolini, Denner, Dittmaier (2008)]
- Photon PDF obtained from NNPDF2.3QED
- $\sigma^{\text{VBF}} = \sigma_{\text{NNLOQCD}}^{\text{DIS}} (1 + \delta_{\text{EW}}) + \sigma_\gamma$

$\sqrt{s}[\text{TeV}]$	$\sigma^{\text{VBF}}[\text{fb}]$	$\Delta_{\text{scale}}[\%]$	$\Delta_{\text{PDF}/\alpha_s/\text{PDF} \oplus \alpha_s}[\%]$	$\sigma_{\text{NNLOQCD}}^{\text{DIS}}[\text{fb}]$	$\delta_{\text{EW}}[\%]$	$\sigma_\gamma[\text{fb}]$	$\sigma_{s\text{-channel}}[\text{fb}]$
7	1241	$+0.19$ -0.21	$\pm 2.1 / \pm 0.4 / \pm 2.2$	1281	-4.4	17.1	584.5(3)
8	1601	$+0.25$ -0.24	$\pm 2.1 / \pm 0.4 / \pm 2.2$	1656	-4.6	22.1	710.4(3)
13	3782	$+0.43$ -0.33	$\pm 2.1 / \pm 0.5 / \pm 2.1$	3939	-5.3	51.9	1378.1(6)
14	4278	$+0.45$ -0.34	$\pm 2.1 / \pm 0.5 / \pm 2.1$	4461	-5.4	58.5	1515.9(6)

$\sqrt{s}[\text{TeV}]$	$\sigma^{\text{VBF}}[\text{fb}]$	$\Delta_{\text{scale}}[\%]$	$\Delta_{\text{PDF}/\alpha_s/\text{PDF} \oplus \alpha_s}[\%]$	$\sigma_{\text{NNLOQCD}}^{\text{DIS}}[\text{fb}]$	$\delta_{\text{EW}}[\%]$	$\sigma_\gamma[\text{fb}]$	$\sigma_{s\text{-channel}}[\text{fb}]$
7	602.4(5)	$+1.3$ -1.6	$\pm 2.3 / \pm 0.3 / \pm 2.3$	630.8(5)	-6.1	9.9	8.2
8	795.9(6)	$+1.3$ -1.5	$\pm 2.3 / \pm 0.3 / \pm 2.3$	834.8(7)	-6.2	13.1	11.1
13	1975(1)	$+1.3$ -1.2	$\pm 2.1 / \pm 0.4 / \pm 2.2$	2084(1)	-6.8	32.3	29.0
14	2236(3)	$+1.5$ -1.3	$\pm 2.1 / \pm 0.4 / \pm 2.1$	2362(3)	-6.9	36.7	33.1



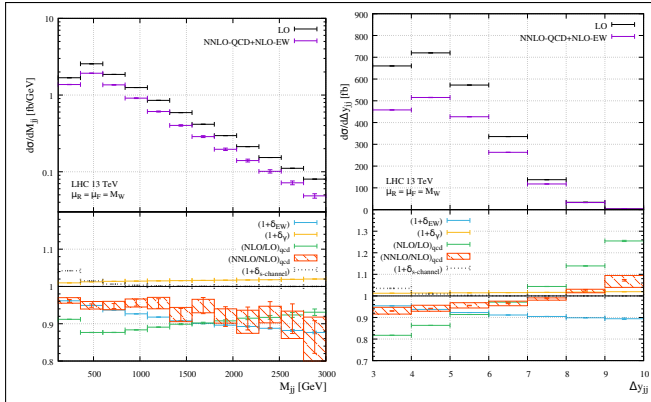
LHCHXSWG YR4 results



- NLO-QCD corrections can be very large (notice scale choice)
- NLO-EW corrections can be sizeable in the tails of distributions
- NNLO-QCD corrections of the same order as NLO-EW corrections
- Photon induced contribution very flat



LHCHXSWG YR4 results



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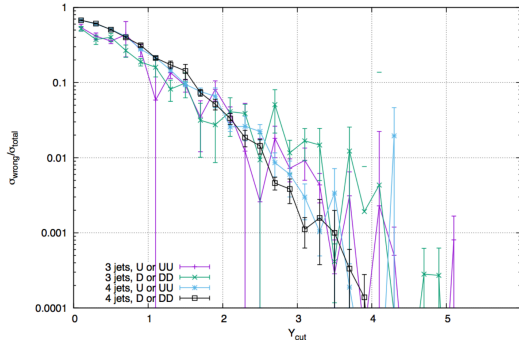
Conclusions

- inclusive $N^3\text{LO}$ are tiny and well within scale uncertainty band at NNLO
- scale uncertainty band reduced significantly
- differential NNLO corrections are sizeable, $\mathcal{O}(10\%)$, and necessary for precision phenomenology
- only moderate shrinkage of NNLO bands compared to NLO bands
- NLO-EW corrections are comparable to NNLO-QCD corrections and should be included
- “projection-to-Born” method can be extended to compute fully differential VBF Higgs at $N^3\text{LO}$

A public code, `proVBFH`, will be released in the near future. Until then total cross sections and distributions with specific cuts can be provided.



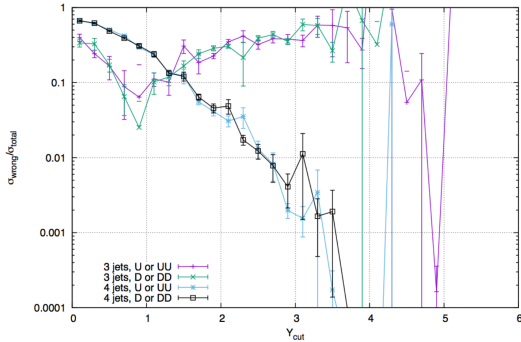
Tagging



With no bug in the code, the probability of a tagged parton having wrong rapidity decreases with increasing rapidity separation between the two hardest jets.



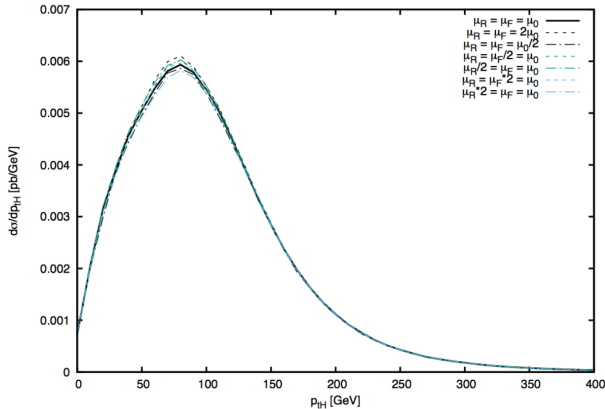
Tagging



With an $\mathcal{O}(1)$ bug in the code, this is clearly not the case any more.



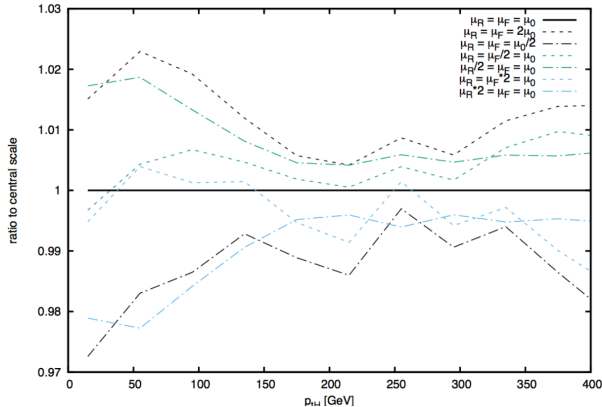
3-point vs 7-point scale variations



3- and 7-point scale variations are very close to each other.



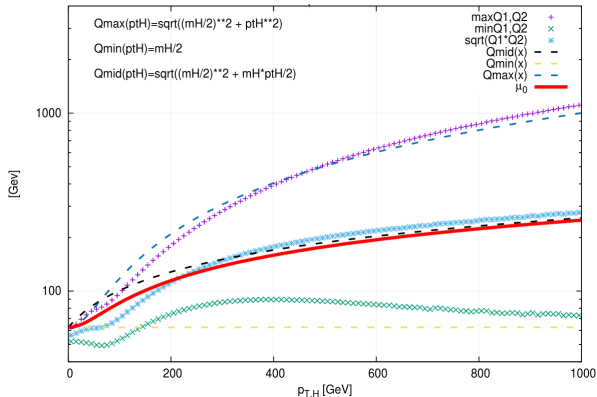
3-point vs 7-point scale variations



3- and 7-point scale variations are very close to each other.



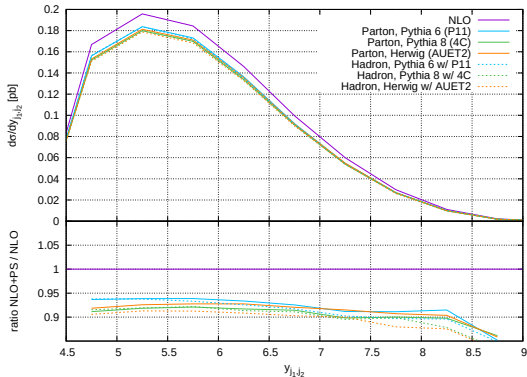
Choice of scale



Our choice of $\mu_0^2(p_{t,H}) = \frac{M_H}{2} \sqrt{\left(\frac{M_H}{2}\right)^2 + p_{t,H}^2}$ is very close to a choice of $\mu = \sqrt{Q_1 Q_2}$.



VBF and Parton Shower



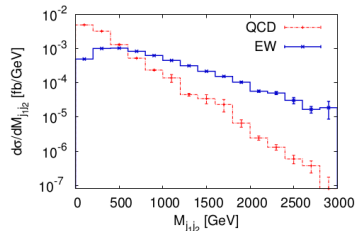
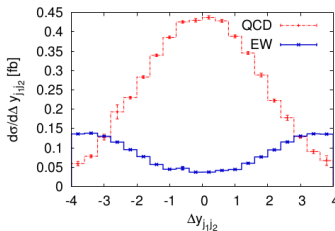
- different parton showers give relatively similar results
- hadronisation effects are consistently small



VBF Cuts

Due to huge QCD backgrounds a set of very selective cuts have to be applied. For this study we picked:

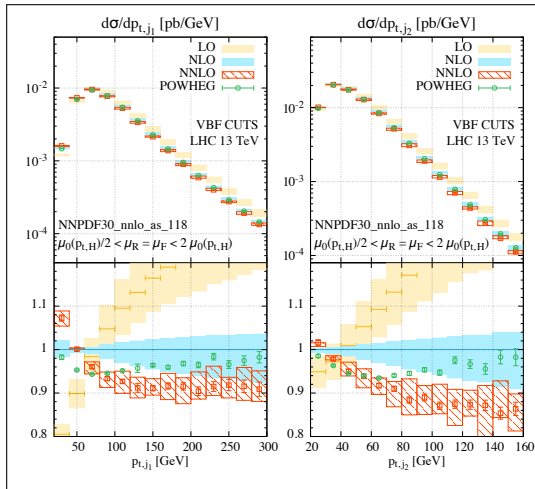
- jets defined with anti- k_t , $R = 0.4$ and $p_t > 25$ GeV
- two hardest jets within $|y| < 4.5$
- high dijet invariant mass, $M_{j_1 j_2} > 600$ GeV, and separation, $\Delta y_{j_1 j_2} > 4.5$
- hardest jets in opposite hemispheres, $y_{j_1} y_{j_2} < 0$



[Jäger, Zanderighi (2011)]



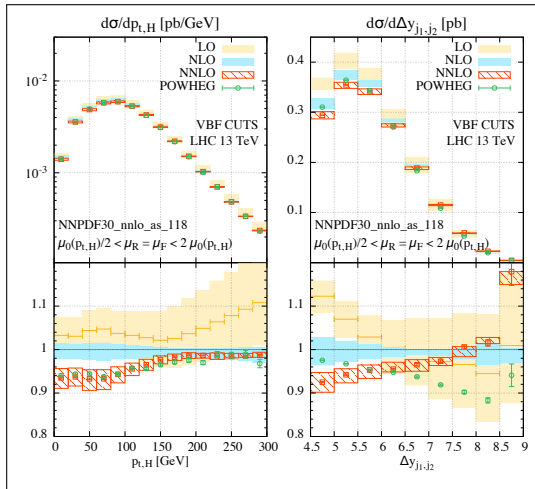
NNLO/NLO/LO PDFs



- LO results with LO PDFs
- NLO results with NLO PDFs
- NNLO results with NNLO PDFs



NNLO/NLO/LO PDFs



- LO results with LO PDFs
- NLO results with NLO PDFs
- NNLO results with NNLO PDFs

