

Searches for lepton-flavor-violating decays of the Higgs boson into $e\tau$ and $\mu\tau$ in $\sqrt{s}=13$ TeV pp collisions with the ATLAS detector

New Frontiers in Lepton Flavor 2023

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arXiv:2302.05225



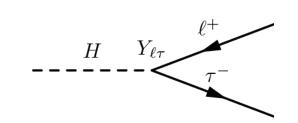






Motivation

• **Lepton flavour conservation** is accidental in the **SM**. Neutrino oscillations exhibit that Lepton Flavour Violating (LFV) processes do occur in nature. LFV processes also in charged lepton sector?

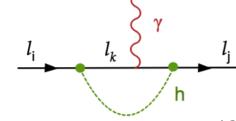


LFV decays of the Higgs boson expected in several SM extensions (SUSY, 2HDM, composite Higgs...). Low energy results provide constraints.

	Indirect		Direct		
H decay	Upper Limit	Process	Reference	Upper Limit	Reference
$H o e \mu$	$\mathcal{O}(10^{-13})$	$\mu o e \gamma$	[1303.0754]	0.061 %	ATLAS 139 fb ⁻¹ [1909.10235]
H o e au	O(10%)	$ au o e\gamma$	[0908.2381]	0.22 %	CMS 137 fb ⁻¹ [2105.03007]
$H o \mu au$	O(10%)	$ au ightarrow \mu \gamma$	[0908.2381]	0.15%	CMS 137 fb ⁻¹ [2105.03007]

• Information from $\mu \to e \gamma$ and $\mu \to e$ conversion in nuclei correlate $H \to e \tau$ and $H \to \mu \tau$ decays [JHEP 06 (2015) 108].

$$\mathcal{B}(h \to \tau \mu) \times \mathcal{B}(h \to \tau e) = \left[\frac{m_h}{8\pi\Gamma_h}\right]^2 \left(\frac{\mathcal{B}(\mu \to e\gamma)}{\mathcal{B}_0^{\mu \to e\gamma}} + \frac{\mathcal{B}(\mu \to e)_{\mathrm{Au}}}{\mathcal{B}_0^{\mu e}}\right)$$
$$= 7.95 \times 10^{-10} \left[\frac{\mathcal{B}(\mu \to e\gamma)}{10^{-13}}\right] + 3.15 \times 10^{-4} \left[\frac{\mathcal{B}(\mu \to e)_{\mathrm{Au}}}{10^{-13}}\right]$$

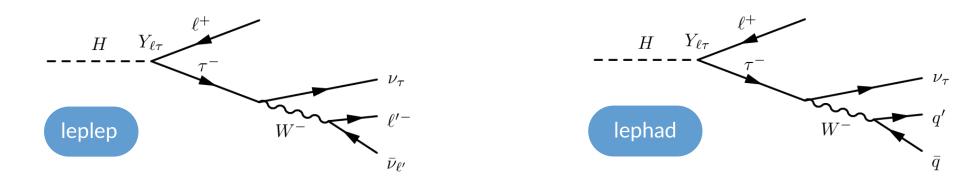


Dominant term, since $\mathcal{B}(\mu \to e)_{\mathrm{Au}} < 7 \times 10^{-13}$

[Eur.Phys.J. C47, 337 (2006)]

Analysis introduction

- $H \rightarrow e\tau$ and $H \rightarrow \mu\tau$ are **independent signals** (two searches).
- Two analyses targeting **leptonic** au **decays** (different background estimation) and one for **hadronic** au **decays**.



Different analyses based on background estimation and final state:

Symmetry based leplep

Fake background data-driven. Other backgrounds estimated mainly via data-driven symmetry method.

MC-template leplep

Fake background data-driven. Other backgrounds estimated with Monte Carlo (MC) templates. Normalization of main backgrounds estimated data-driven.

MC-template lephad

Fake background data-driven. Other backgrounds estimated through MC. Normalization of main background data-driven.

Event selection and categorization

- Main Higgs boson production modes considered for LFV signal: gluon fusion, vector boson fusion (VBF), vector boson associated production.
- General strategy: loose preselection, further cut-based categorization into VBF and Non VBF regions. Simplified description below.

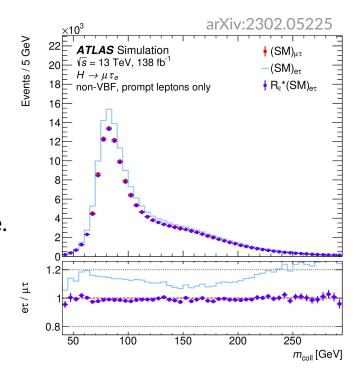
Selection	leplep	lephad	
Baseline	$1e$ and 1μ with opposite sign. No hadronic $ au$	$1e$ or 1μ and 1 hadronic $ au$ with opposite sign	
	b-tagged jet veto		
VBF	$N_{ m jets}$	$N_{ m jets} > 2$	
Non VBF	Non VBF Fail VBF selection		

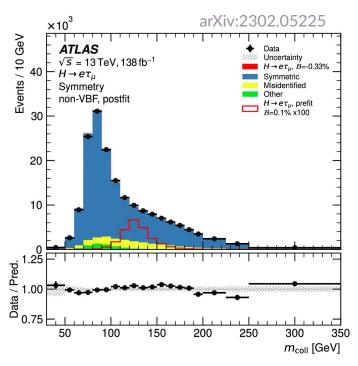
- leplep final state with one electron and one muon ($e\tau_{\mu}$ or $\mu\tau_{e}$). Channel classification based on p_{T} ordering in approximate Higgs boson rest frame ($p_{T}(\ell_{H}) > p_{T}(\ell_{\tau})$).
- Additional control regions dependent on the analysis to extract normalization of main backgrounds.
- Multivariate analyses (MVA) used to enhance sensitivity. Final discriminants for fit built from MVA outputs.

Background estimation with the symmetry method

Symmetry based leplep

- Data-driven search: background in one channel estimated using the data yields in the other channel [Phys.Rev.D 90, 015025 (2014)].
 - Standard Model processes are symmetric with respect $e \leftrightarrow \mu$ exchange.
 - LFV decays of the Higgs boson where $\mathcal{B}(H \to e\tau) \neq \mathcal{B}(H \to \mu\tau)$ break this symmetry.
 - Split data in two samples ($e\tau$, $\mu\tau$). Correct induced asymmetries (experimental efficiencies and different rates for misidentified objects). Use **one sample as background estimation of the other.**
- Misidentified objects estimated through fake factor method based on lepton identification.
- If signal is present in one channel, a deficit should be observed in the other.
- If no assumption on the branching ratios, method sensitive to branching ratio difference.

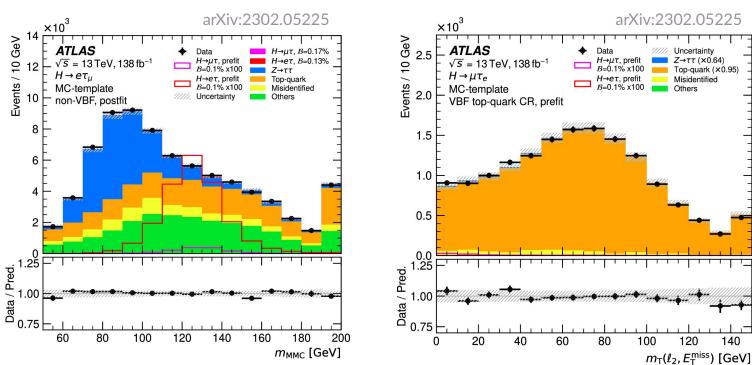


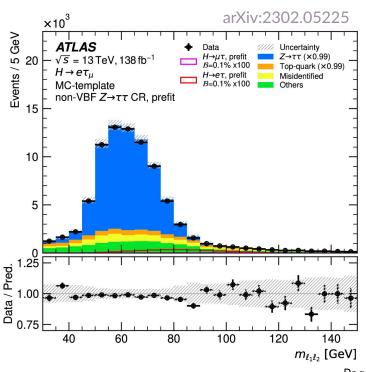


Background estimation with MC-templates

MC-template leplep

- Z o au au and top-quark background. Estimated through MC templates. Normalization extracted from data in control regions (separately for VBF and Non VBF).
- **Diboson**. From MC templates. Modelling checked in validation region.
- $Z \rightarrow \mu \mu$. From MC templates. Normalization (and uncertainty) from dedicated control region.
- Other minor backgrounds estimated from MC.
- Misidentified background. Data-driven ABCD method using lepton charge and isolation.

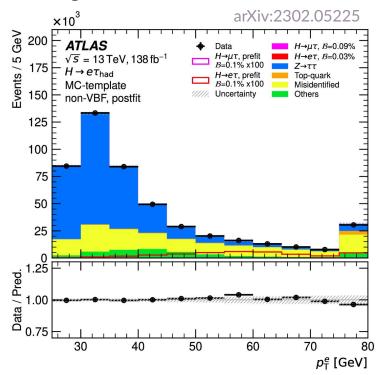


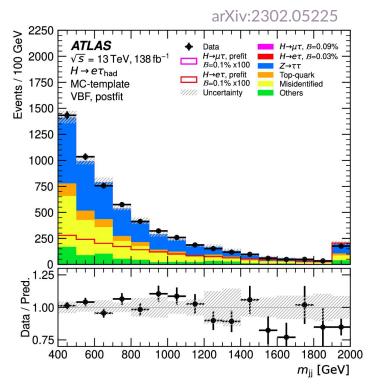


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- Z o au au. Extracted from MC templates. Different data-driven normalization factors for VBF and Non VBF.
- Top-quark. Extracted from MC templates. Shared data-driven normalization factors with MC-template leplep.
- $Z \rightarrow \mu \mu$. Normalization uncertainty extracted from validation region.
- Other minor backgrounds estimated from MC templates.
- **Misidentified background**. Data-driven fake factor method based on hadronic τ identification.





MVA strategy

- Different MVA strategies for the different analyses. Separate trainings for VBF and Non VBF to profit from different kinematic properties.
- Two main strategies:
 - 1. Multiclassifier algorithms based on NNs. Use signal node as final discriminant.

Symmetry based leplep Non VBF

- 2. Multiple classifiers, each devoted to separate signal from specific backgrounds. Combine score of each classifier to obtain final discriminant.
 - For example, MC-template leplep uses three BDTs that separate signal from:
 - $Z/H \rightarrow \tau \tau + Z \rightarrow \ell \ell$.
 - Top-quark + Diboson + $H \rightarrow WW$.
 - Misidentified background.

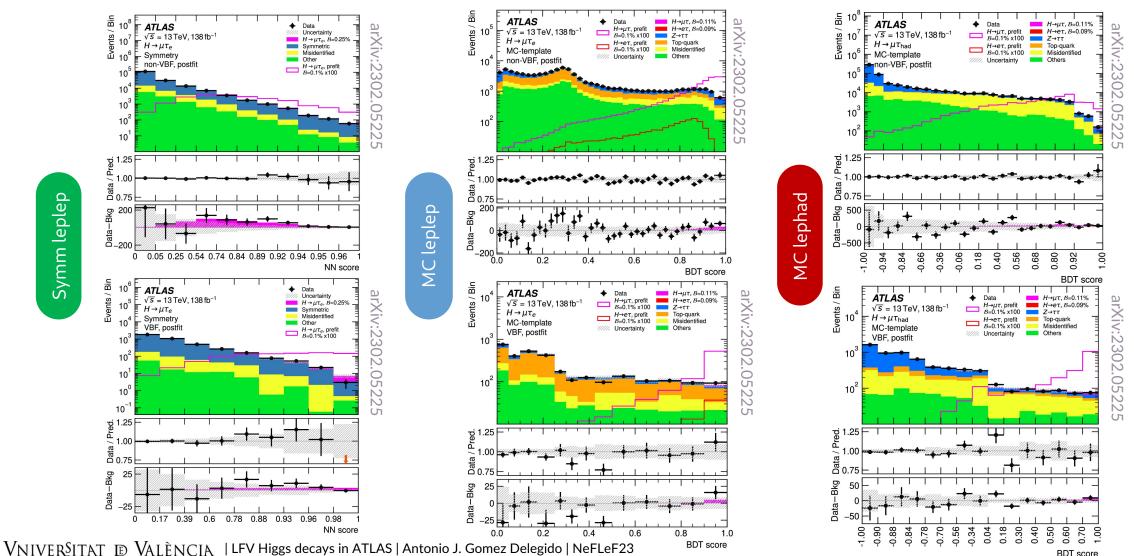
Symmetry based leplep VBF

MC-template leplep

MC-template lephad

MVA output distributions for the fit

• In this slide, distributions from $\mu\tau$. For MC-template, showing post-fit yields from the combined fit of the MC-template analyses. For Symmetry, post-fit yields from Symmetry standalone fit.



Statistical analysis overview

- The parameters of interest (POIs) of the analyses are the branching ratios of the LFV decays.
- $\mathcal{B}(H \to \ell \tau)$ extraction with **Maximum Binned Likelihood fit** and combining VBF and Non VBF regions. Two signal parametrizations:

1 POI

Fits in $e\tau$ and $\mu\tau$ channels are independent (e.g. assume $\mathcal{B}(H \to e\tau)$ =0 when extracting $\mu = \mathcal{B}(H \to \mu\tau)$)

MC leplep Non VBF + Symm leplep VBF + MC lephad

2 POI

Simultaneous fit of $H \rightarrow e\tau$ and $H \rightarrow \mu\tau$ signals.

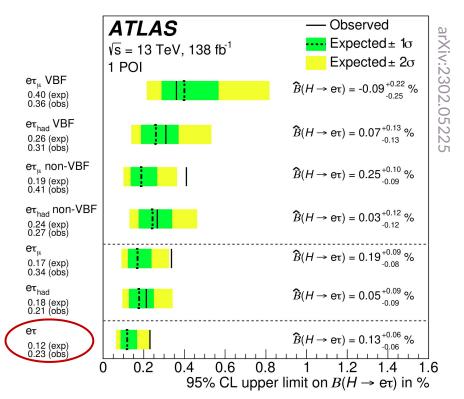
- 1. No assumption needed on branching ratios.
- 2. Stronger constraints in background nuisance parameters.

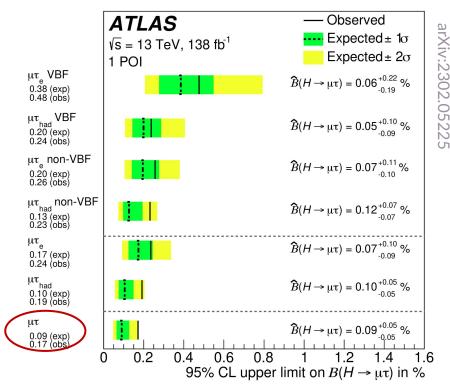
MC leplep + MC lephad

• When combining with **Symm. based only 1 POI fit is possible** (one of the channels is required for the background estimate of the other)

- Combination of the three analyses with a 1 POI fit setup:
 - Observed limits are above expected ones for both signals.
 - 2.2 σ excess seen for $\mathcal{B}(H \to e\tau)$ and 1.9 σ for $\mathcal{B}(H \to \mu\tau)$.
- 1 POI setup also used to extract **branching ratio difference** with **Symmetry** analysis:

$$\mathcal{B}(H \to \mu \tau) - \mathcal{B}(H \to e \tau) = (0.25 \pm 0.10)\%$$

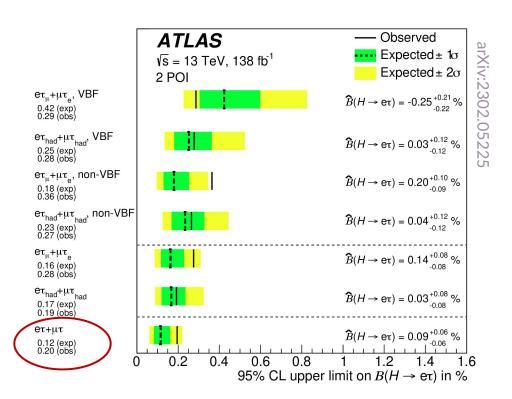


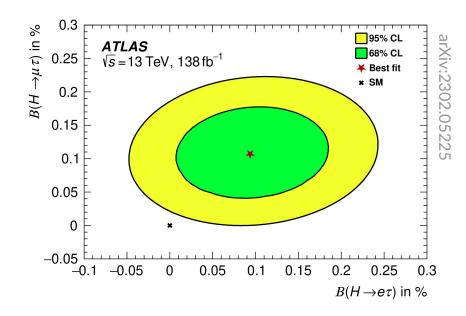


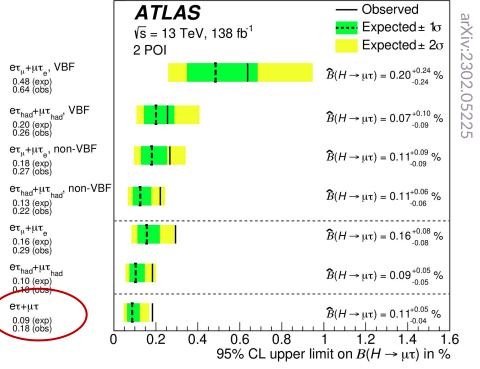




- Observed limits are above expected ones, in line with 1 POI fits.
- 1.6 σ excess seen for $\mathcal{B}(H \to e\tau)$ and 2.5 σ for $\mathcal{B}(H \to \mu\tau)$.
 - Not significant. 95% CL limits shown in figures.
- Global compatibility with SM within 2.1σ .



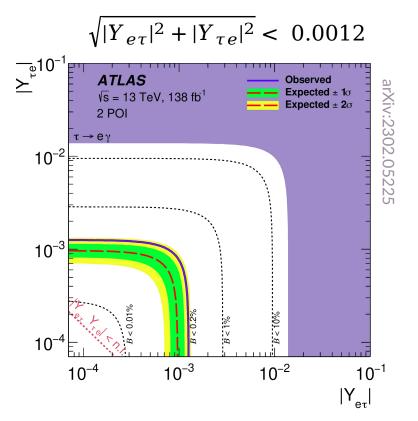


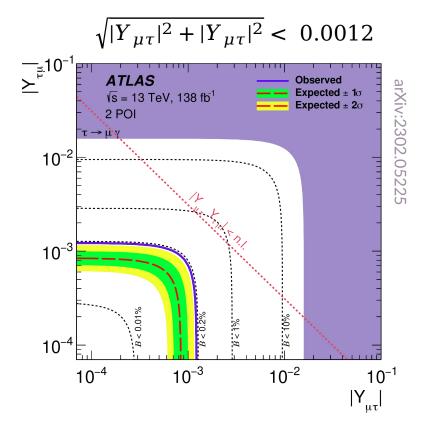


Branching ratio values can be related to non-diagonal Yukawa coupling matrix elements:

$$|Y_{\ell\tau}|^2 + |Y_{\tau\ell}|^2 = \frac{8\pi}{m_H} \frac{\mathcal{B}(H \to \ell\tau)}{1 - \mathcal{B}(H \to \ell\tau)} \Gamma_H^{\rm SM}$$

For the 2 POI results:

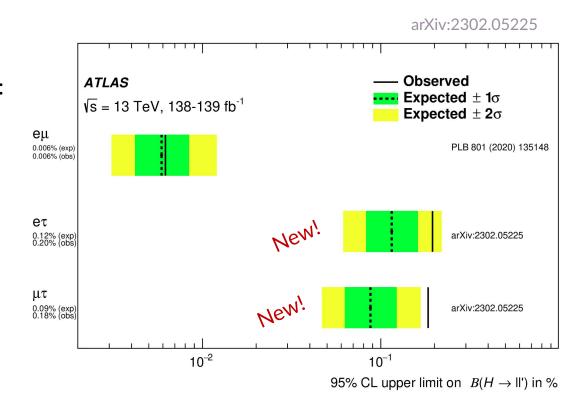




Conclusions

arXiv:2302.05225

- Presented ATLAS searches for $H \to e \tau$ and $H \to \mu \tau$ with 138 fb⁻¹.
- From the simultaneous fit of the two signals, observed (expected) **upper limits at 95% CL** on the branching ratios are:
 - $\mathcal{B}(H \to e\tau) < 0.20\%$ (0.11%).
 - $\mathcal{B}(H \to \mu \tau) < 0.18\%$ (0.09%).
 - Compatibility with SM within 2.1σ .
 - Results complete a full set of ATLAS searches for LFV
 Higgs boson decays into leptons with the Run 2 dataset.
- Obtained a branching ratio difference of $\mathcal{B}(H \to \mu \tau) \mathcal{B}(H \to e \tau) = (0.25 \pm 0.10)\%$. Non-significant excess.
- Prospects of the searches at the HL-LHC estimated for the two analysis methods extrapolating the Run 2 results. See Naman's talk.



Additional material

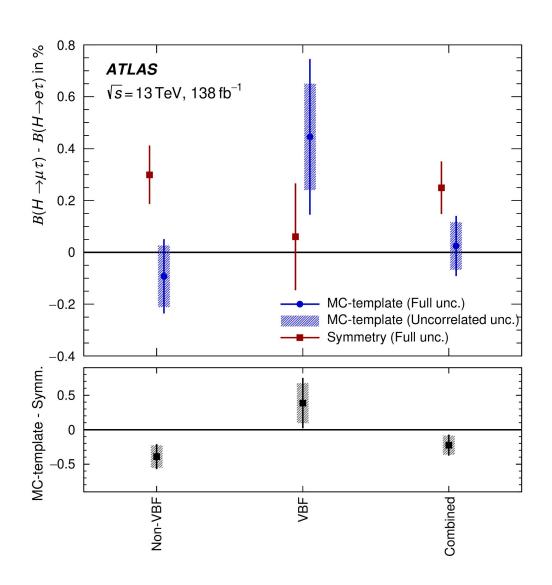
Systematic uncertainties

- Impact of systematic uncertainties similar between the 1 POI and 2 POI fit setups.
- Analysis results limited by systematic uncertainties. Mainly from:
 - Background sample statistical uncertainties.
 - Misidentified background estimation related uncertainties (especially from leplep).

2 POI	Impact on ob	mpact on observed [10 ⁻⁴]	
Source of uncertainty	$\hat{\mathcal{B}}(H \to e \tau)$	$\hat{\mathcal{B}}(H \to \mu \tau)$	
Flavour tagging	0.7	0.2	
Misidentified background ($e\tau_{\rm had}$)	2.1	0.3	
Misidentified background $(e\tau_{\mu})$	2.7	0.3	
Misidentified background ($\mu \tau_{had}$)	0.6	1.4	
Misidentified background ($\mu \tau_e$)	0.9	1.0	
Jet and $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$	1.2	0.9	
Electrons and muons	1.4	0.5	
Luminosity	0.6	0.4	
Hadronic τ decays	0.9	0.9	
Theory (signal)	0.8	0.8	
Theory $(Z + jets processes)$	0.8	1.0	
$Z \to \ell\ell$ normalisation $(e\tau)$	< 0.1	< 0.1	
$Z \to \ell \ell$ normalisation $(\mu \tau)$	0.2	0.9	
Background sample size	3.7	2.3	
Total systematic uncertainty	5.1	3.6	
Data sample size	3.0	2.7	
Total	5.9	4.5	

Measurement of branching ratio difference

- Symmetry method is **sensitive** to the **difference of** branching ratios $\mathcal{B}(H \to \mu \tau) \mathcal{B}(H \to e \tau)$.
- Without assumption of one of the $\mathcal{B}=0$, then the measurement should be interpreted as a branching ratio difference.
- Symmetry results are compared with results from 2 POI fit of the MC-template leplep channel.
- Due to overlap in data, data statistical uncertainties as well as signal uncertainties are correlated between MC-template and Symmetry based analyses.
- Other uncertainties are considered uncorrelated.
- Compatibility found to be within 2.3 σ .



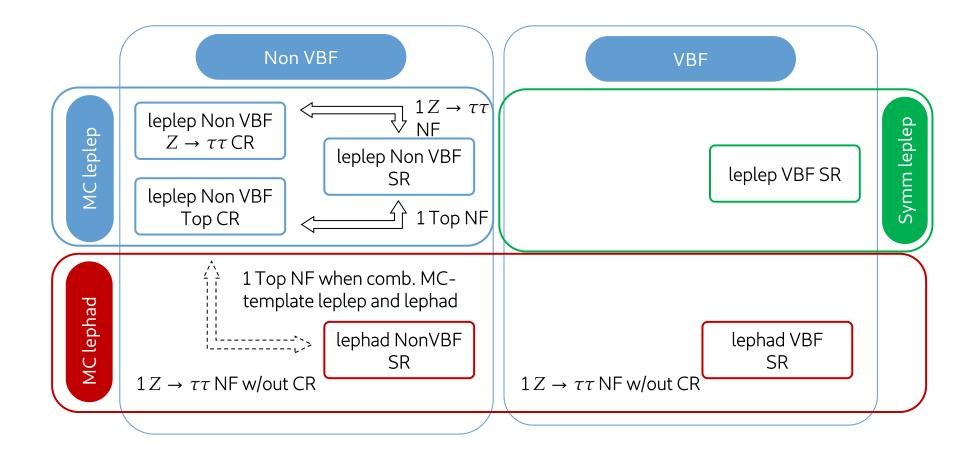
Selection

Selection	$\ell au_{\ell'}$	$\ell au_{ m had}$		
	exactly $1e$ and 1μ , OS	exactly 1ℓ and $1\tau_{\text{had-vis}}$, OS		
	$ au_{ m had}$ -veto	$ au_{ m had}{ m Tight~ID}$		
Baseline		Medium eBDT ($e\tau_{\rm had}$)		
Daseime	<i>b</i> -veto	<i>b</i> -veto		
	$p_{\rm T}^{\ell_1} > 45 (35) {\rm GeV MC}$ -template (Symmetry method)	$p_{\rm T}^{\ell} > 27.3 {\rm GeV}$		
	$p_{\mathrm{T}}^{\ell_2} > 15 \mathrm{GeV}$	$p_{\mathrm{T}}^{\tau_{\mathrm{had\text{-}vis}}} > 25 \mathrm{GeV}, \eta^{\tau_{\mathrm{had\text{-}vis}}} < 2.4$		
	$30 \text{GeV} < m_{\ell_1 \ell_2} < 150 \text{GeV}$	$\sum \cos \Delta \phi(i, E_{\rm T}^{\rm miss}) > -0.35$		
	$0.2 < p_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{track}}(\ell_2 = e)/p_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{cluster}}(\ell_2 = e) < 1.25 \text{ (MC-template)}$	$ i=\ell, au_{ ext{had-vis}} \Delta \eta(\ell, au_{ ext{had-vis}}) < 2$		
	$0.2 < p_{\rm T} - (\epsilon_2 - e)/p_{\rm T} - (\epsilon_2 - e) < 1.25$ (We-template) track d_0 significance requirement (see text)	$ \Delta I/(t, t_{\text{had-vis}}) \leq 2$		
	$ z_0 \sin \theta < 0.5 \mathrm{mm}$			
1	$ z_0 \sin \theta < 0.5 \text{ mm}$			
	Baseline			
VBF	$\geq 2 \text{ jets}, p_{\mathrm{T}}^{j_1} > 40 \mathrm{GeV}, p_{\mathrm{T}}^{j_2} > 30 \mathrm{GeV}$			
	$ \Delta \eta_{\rm jj} > 3$, $m_{\rm jj} > 400{\rm GeV}$			
	Baseline plus fail VBF categorisation			
non-VBF	_	veto events if		
	-	$90 < m_{\text{vis}}(e, \tau_{\text{had-vis}}) < 100 \text{ GeV}$		

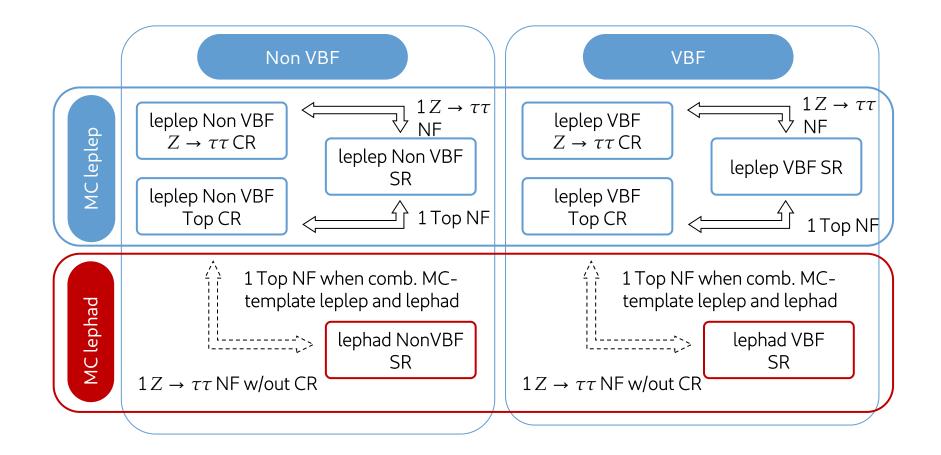
Selection

Selection	$\ell au_{\ell'}$	$\ell au_{ m had}$
misidentified background CR	$non ext{-}VBF ext{ (or } VBF)$ statistically independent lepton (ℓ	
$Z \to \mu\mu$ CR/VR $(\ell\tau_{\ell'}/\ell\tau_{had})$	Baseline with 35 GeV $< p_{\rm T}^{\ell_1} < 45$ GeV 75 GeV $< m_{\ell_1 \ell_2} < 100$ GeV $ \Delta \phi(\ell_2, E_{\rm T}^{\rm miss}) < 1.5$ $1.25 < p_{\rm T}^{\rm track}(\ell_2)/p_{\rm T}^{\rm cluster}(\ell_2) < 3$	$\begin{aligned} Baseline \\ \eta(\tau) &< 0.1 \\ 90\text{GeV} &< m_{\text{coll}}(\mu,\tau) < 110\text{GeV} \end{aligned}$
top-quark CR	non-VBF (or VBF) selection with inverted b-veto requirement	_
$Z \to \tau \tau \text{ CR}$	non-VBF (or VBF) selection with 35 GeV $< p_{\rm T}^{\ell_1} <$ 45 GeV	_
Diboson VR	$Baseline$ $p_{\mathrm{T}}^{\ell_2} > 30 \mathrm{GeV}$ $100 \mathrm{GeV} < m_{\ell_1 \ell_2} < 150 \mathrm{GeV}$ $m_{\mathrm{T}} > 30 \mathrm{GeV}$ veto events with jets with $p_{\mathrm{T}} > 30 \mathrm{GeV}$	_

Combined 1 POI fit



Combined 2 POI fit



Fake estimation

- 1. Fake Factor method computed in Z+jets CR (2 leptons tagged to Z, 3rd is fake candidate) for $j \rightarrow \ell$.
- 2. $\gamma \to e, \mu \to e$ and $\tau_{had} \to \ell$ via MC truth info. Maily from $V\gamma, Z \to \mu\mu, Z \to \tau\tau$ See dedicated talk by Hao on Monday for all the details.

Fake factor method

• FF computed in Z+jets CR:

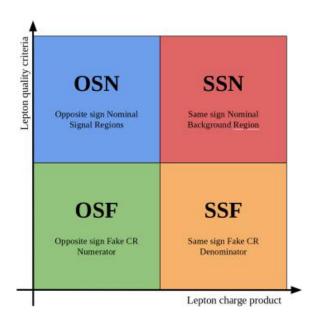
$$FF = \frac{N_{(\mathrm{ID,iso})}^{\mathrm{data}} - N_{(\mathrm{ID,iso})}^{\mathrm{promptMC}}}{N_{\mathrm{anti-(ID,iso)}}^{\mathrm{data}} - N_{\mathrm{anti-(ID,iso)}}^{\mathrm{promptMC}}}$$

- (ID, iso): pass medium id. and isolation
- anti-(ID,iso):
 - For muon: fail iso and pass medium id.
 - For electron: pass loose id. Fail medium id or iso.
- FF binned in lepton flavor, $p_{\rm T}$ and $\Delta \phi(\ell, E_{\rm T}^{\rm miss})$
- ullet CFs to correct flavour composition differences between SR and CR. Binned in flavour and $p_{
 m T}$

$$CF = \frac{FF_{SR}^{MC}}{FF_{Z+iets}^{MC}} \quad N_{SR}^{fakes} = FF \times CF \times (N_{SR; anti-(ID,iso)}^{data} - N_{SR, anti-(ID,iso)}^{promptMC})$$

ABCD method

- OSN: SR. SSN: SR sselection but SS charges of light leptons.
- OSF and SSF. Fake enriched regions (Fake CRs). anti-ID and anti-iso + other lepton quality criteria:
 - For muon: fail iso and pass medium id.
 - For electron: either fail isolation or medium id. but pass loose id.
- Assume OSN = SSN $\times \frac{OSF}{SSF} = SSN \times TF$
- Transfer factor parametrized in terms of trigger and b-veto/tag



• Estimate of $j \to \tau_{had}$ with W+jets and QCD multijets as main sources (two dedicated CRs). Data-driven fake factor method.

Fake Factor Method

- $N_{\text{fakes}}^{\text{SR}} = (N_{\text{data}}^{\text{anti}-\tau} N_{\text{MC, no }j \to \tau}^{\text{anti}-\tau}) \times \mathcal{F}$
- anti τ : pass VeryLoose ID but fail Tight ID
- Two main sources: QCD multijets and W+jets. Two dedicated CRs.

$$\mathcal{F} = R_{QCD}F_{QCD} + (1 - R_{QCD})F_W$$

• Derive FF for each source and apply to anti $-\tau$ events in SR

$$F_{i} = \frac{N_{\text{data}}^{\text{CR}_{i}} - N_{\text{MC, no } j \to \tau}^{\text{CR}_{i}}}{N_{\text{data}}^{\text{anti}-\tau, \text{CR}_{i}} - N_{\text{MC, no } j \to \tau}^{\text{anti}-\tau, \text{CR}_{i}}}$$

• FF bined in $p_{\rm T}$ and 1/3 prong.

MVA strategy

Symmetry based leplep

NNs trained with Keras

Separate training for Non VBF and VBF. Shared between $e au_u$ and $\mu\tau_e$

Non VBF

1 Multiclassifier NN with 3 output nodes. Signal output node used for fit.

VBF

3 BDTs. Scores combined linearly.

- LFV vs. $Z\tau\tau+H\tau\tau+MC$ fakes
- LFV vs. Top+VV+HWW

MC-template leplep

BDTs with TMVA

Separate training for Non VBF and VBF. Shared between $e \tau_n$ and $\mu \tau_e$

Non VBF and VBF

3 BDTs. Scores combined linearly.

- LFV vs. $Z\tau\tau+H\tau\tau+Z\ell\ell$
- LFV vs. Top+VV+HWW
- LFV vs. Fakes

MC-template lephad

BDTs with TMVA

Separate trainings for Non VBF and VBF and for $e\tau_u$, $\mu\tau_e$

Non VBF eτ

3 BDTs. Scores combined linearly.

- LFV vs. Ζττ
- LFV vs. Fakes
- LFV vs. Other backgrounds

Non VBF $\mu\tau$ and VBF

2 BDTs. Scores combined linearly (NonVBF $\mu\tau$) or quadratically (VBF).

- LFV vs. Zττ
- LFV vs. Other backgrounds

MVA output distributions for fit

- In this slide, distributions from $e\tau$.
- For MC-template, postfit signal contributions from the 2 POI fit.
- For Symmetry, postfit signals coming from 1POI Symmetry standalone fit.

Uncertainty

Misidentified

 $H \rightarrow e \tau_{ii}$, prefit

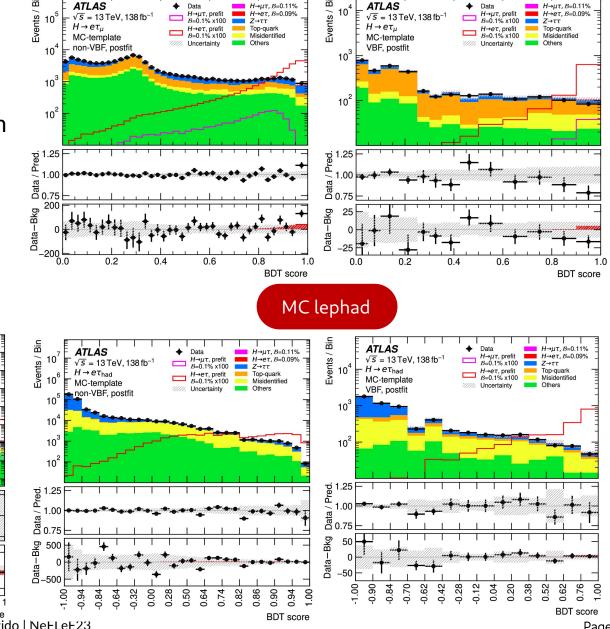
Symmetric

 $H \rightarrow e \tau_{\mu}$, B=-0.33%

 $\sqrt{s} = 13 \text{ TeV}, 138 \text{ fb}^{-1}$

10

Symm leplep



MC leplep

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0.79

0.89

0.93 0.96

25

ATLAS

 $\sqrt{s} = 13 \,\text{TeV}, 138 \,\text{fb}^{-1}$

 $H \rightarrow e\tau_{\mu}$, B=-0.33%

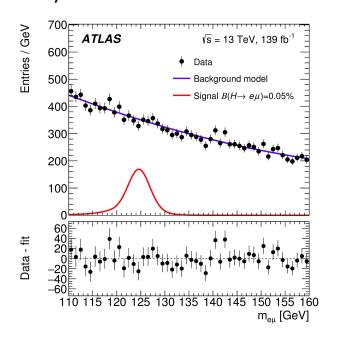
Misidentified

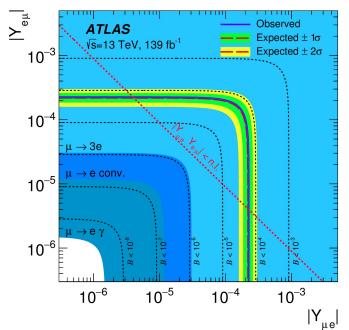
 $H \rightarrow e \tau_{\mu}$, prefit

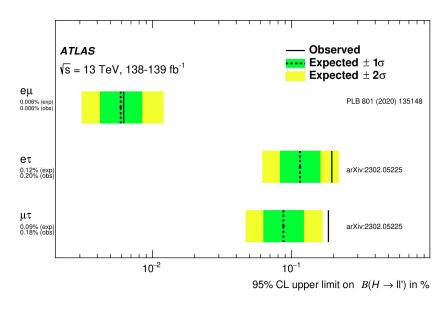
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Searches for LFV $m{H} ightarrow m{e}\, m{\mu}$

- Unbinned fit of the dilepton mass spectrum, similar to $H \to \mu \mu$ and $H \to \gamma \gamma$ analyses.
- Events are speared in 8 categories (low p_T , VBF, 3 central and 3 non-central).
- Background modeled by a Bernstein polynomial of degree two, with parameters uncorrelated between categories. Signal modeled by convolution of Crystal Ball and Gaussian functions.
- No excess obserbed. 95% CL observed (expected) limit on the branching ratio in % is 6.1×10^{-5} (5.8 \times 10^{-5})

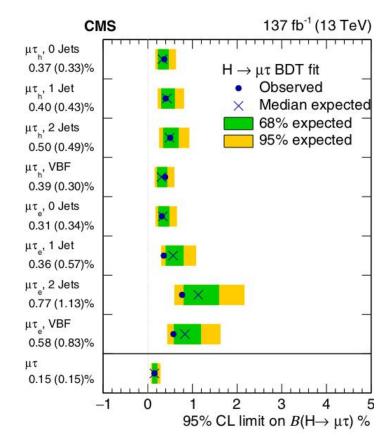


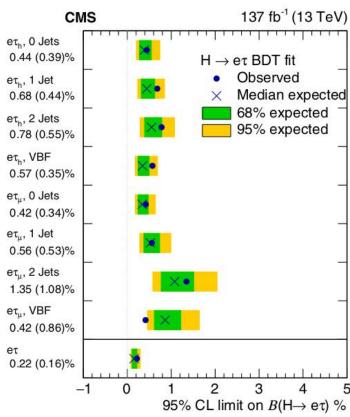




Comparison with CMS

- Main differences with respect to ATLAS search:
 - Leplep background estimation is MCtemplate.
 - Using **embedding** for $Z \to \tau \tau$.
 - New TaulD based on DNN (70% eff, 1% mis-id).
 - 1 POI fit for branching ratio extraction.
 - Lepton assignment based on p_T ordering in lab frame.
 - MVA based on BDT. Trained only with part of the background.
 - Finer categorization of Non VBF regions depending on number of jets.





CMS 137 fb⁻¹ [arXiv:2105.03007]

Combined 1 POI fit

1 POI	Impact on observed [10 ⁻⁴]		
Source of uncertainty	$\hat{\mathcal{B}}(H \to e\tau)$	$\hat{\mathcal{B}}(H \to \mu \tau)$	
Flavour tagging	0.6	0.4	
Misidentified background ($\ell \tau_{\rm had}$)	2.1	1.5	
Misidentified background $(\ell \tau_{\ell'})$	2.9	1.6	
Jet and $E_{\mathrm{T}}^{\mathrm{miss}}$	1.1	1.1	
Electrons and muons	0.2	0.5	
Luminosity	0.6	0.5	
Hadronic τ decays	0.9	1.0	
Theory (signal)	0.9	0.7	
Theory $(Z + jets processes)$	1.0	1.2	
Theory (top-quark processes)	0.3	0.3	
Theory (diboson processes)	0.4	0.7	
$Z \to \ell\ell$ normalisation	0.2	0.7	
Symmetric background estimate	0.2	0.1	
Background sample size	4.2	2.4	
Total systematic uncertainty	5.3	3.9	
Data sample size	2.9	2.7	
Total	6.1	4.7	