Milestones di Fisica





Riunione ALICE - Referee INFN Roma 9-10 Luglio, 2025

F. Fionda University & INFN, Cagliari

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The physics of ALICE in one slide...



Broad and multi-disciplinary physics program through the study of different collision systems !





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The physics of ALICE in one slide...



Broad and multi-disciplinary physics program through the study of different collision systems !



<u>Heavy-ion collisions</u>



- Initial state & reference for HI collisions
- Collectivity and QGP-like effects in small systems

Contributions beyond QCD physics

- Neutron stars and equation of state
- Contribution to dark matter research
- Cosmic rays

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VS



In-medium dissociation (color Debye screening)

Matui & Satz, Phys.Lett. B178 (1986) 416-422



 Sequential dissociation: stronger suppression expected for Ψ(2S) compared to J/Ψ (ground state)

 Charmonium excited-to-ground state ratios useful to disentangle among production models

Regeneration of quarkonia

Braun-Munzinger and Stachel, PLB 490 (2000) 196 Thews et al., PRC 63 (2001) 054905



Nature 448 (2007) 302-309





Milestone #8, DQ [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100%





PRL 132 (2024) 042301 PLB 797 (2019) 134836, A. Andronic et al. PLB 664:253-257,2008 R. Rapp et al.

- Factor ~2 suppression wrt pp collisions
- No strong centrality dependence
- ✓ Improved precision in Run3 compared to Run2 (→ expected to further improve by adding 2024 Pb-Pb statistics)
- SHMc and TAMU qualitatively describe the trend as a function of centrality (expressed in terms of $\langle N_{part} \rangle$



Anisotropic flow of identified hadrons









Decomposed transverse projection of participant region in Fourier series

Initial spatial anisotropy:

- Almond shape of the participant region \rightarrow generates ellipticity (ε_2)
- Energy density fluctuations in the overlap region \rightarrow generates triangularity (ε_3)
- Higher harmonics → mainly arising from the combination of the lower order components
- \rightarrow low- $p_{\rm T}$: sensitive to bulk QGP properties
- \rightarrow high- $p_{\rm T}$: sensitive to the in medium energy loss (path-length dependence)



J/Ψ flow in Pb-Pb at 5.36 TeV preliminary (Run 3)



Milestone #7, DQ [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100%



- Improved granularity of Run3 wrt Run2
- No sign of energy dependence

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 \checkmark Increasing v₂ from central to semicentral



Charm hadron flow in Pb-Pb at 5.36 TeV preliminary (Run 3)



Milestone #1, HF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 100% آط^{0.5} ک[∼] 0.45 ALICE Preliminary Pb–Pb $\sqrt{s_{\text{NN}}} = 5.36 \text{ TeV}$ 0.40 30–50%, |y| < 0.8, $|\Delta \eta| > 1.3 \sqrt{s_{_{\rm NN}}} = 5.02 \text{ TeV}$, 30–40% $\circ \pi^+ |y| < 0.5,$ 0.35 Prompt D⁰ $|\Delta \eta| > 2.0$ Prompt D⁺ JHEP 09 (2018) 006 0.30 Prompt D⁺ Inclusive J/ ψ 2.5 < y < 4, $|\Delta \eta|$ > 1.5 0.25 0.20 0.15 0.10 0.05 0.00 10 20 ρ_τ (GeV/*c*) 4×10⁻¹ 456 2 3 ALI-PREL-596279

- Prompt D-meson (D⁰, D⁺, D⁺) flow measured using full
 - 2023 Pb-Pb statistics (first measurement of D^o below 1 GeV/c
 - Clear mass ordering observed below \sim 3 GeV/c \rightarrow expected from hydrodynamical evolution
 - \checkmark Larger v₂ for open-charm wrt hidden-charm (and hint of $D_{\tau_{c}}^{+} v_{2}^{-} < D_{\tau_{c}}^{0}/D_{\tau_{c}}^{+} v_{2}^{-}$) at intermediate $p_{\tau} \rightarrow$ contribution of bulk + coalescence ?
 - ✓ Common v₂ for $p_{\tau} > 8$ GeV/c → in-medium energy loss

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Charm hadron flow in Pb-Pb at 5.36 TeV – preliminary (Run 3)



<u>છ</u>. 0.35 1 **ALICE Preliminary** • Prompt Λ_c^+ Prompt D⁰ Pb–Pb, 30–50% Transport models, $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02 \text{ TeV}$ $\sqrt{s_{_{\rm NN}}} = 5.36 \,{\rm TeV}$ TAMU Λ_{c}^{+} TAMU D⁰ 0.15 0.1 0.05 0 14 16 18 20 22 24 2 12 6 8 4 10 *p*_{_} (GeV/*c*)

Milestone #1, HF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 100%

- ✓ First prompt charm baryon (∧_c⁺) v₂ measurement in Pb-Pb collisions !
- ✓ Compatible with $D^0 v_2$ for $p_T < 4$ GeV/c
- ✓ Clear baryon-meson splitting (significance: 3.6 σ) visible for $p_T > 4$ GeV/c → first evidence in the charm sector !
- Well reproduced by transport models

ALI-PREL-596997



Strange particle flow in Pb-Pb at 5.36 TeV – preliminary (Run3)



Milestone #12, LF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 30%



- First measurements already in a very good shape
- Significantly increased granularity in p_T / centrality wrt Run2
- To be done:
 - Check in-plane and out-ofplane efficiencies vs centrality
 - Finalize systematic uncertainties

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The physics of ALICE in one slide...



Broad and multi-disciplinary physics program through the study of different collision systems !



- Properties of QGP and its dynamical evolution
- Interaction with medium constituents
- Hadronization in medium

Hadronic correlations and composite objects formation

- Hadron-hadron correlations and interactions studies using femtoscopy
- (Anti)(hyper)nuclei production

Small and (ultra)peripheral systems



- Test / constrain QCD-based models
- Initial state & reference for HI collisions
- Collectivity and QGP-like effects in small systems

Contributions beyond QCD physics

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B-meson production cross section in pp at 13.6 TeV - publication (Run3)

Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare



Milestone #3, HF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50%





- B^o production cross section based on exclusive reconstruction in pp triggered data
 - First measurement at LHC down to such very low $\rm p_{\scriptscriptstyle T}$ (> 1~GeV/c)
 - agreement within uncertainties with pQCD calculations and TAMU predictions

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B-meson production cross section in pp at 13.6 TeV - publication (Run3)

Milestone #3, HF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50%





 Investigating rapidity dependence of B-meson production via mid(ALICE)-toforward(LHCb) rapidity cross section ratio



 Hint of different slopes in data wrt FONLL

Status:

- paper proposal approved by the ALICE collaboration in June
- first draft of the paper ready, currently under internal review

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Luminosity determination on VdM scans of pp 2023 (Run3) - preliminary

Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare

Milestone #17, Lumi [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50%



Crucial ingredient for cross section normalization!





Luminosity determination on VdM scans of pp 2023 (Run3) - preliminary



Milestone #17, Lumi [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50%

Status:

- Main analysis performed
- Corrections (ongoing):
 - Ghost-charge and satellite-charge correction factor
 - Length-scale calibration factor
 - Non-factorisation correction factor
- Systematic uncertainties to be finalized









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Dmeson-charged particle azimuthal correlations in pp at 13.6 TeV - preliminary (Run3)



Milestone #4, HF [data prevista completamento: 30-09-2025] => 100%



 Pythia8 with different tunes provides a fair description of the 10 evolution of NS yields and widths as a function of $p_{\tau}(D^+)$ in different regions of p_assoc





- ✓ Clear correlation in the NS visible in the unlike-sign (ULS) Λ_c^+ -proton pairs, absent in case of like-sign (LS) Λ_c^+ -proton pairs → local baryon number conservation ?
- Similar effect visible in PYTHIA8: enhanced in Monash tune; CR Mode 2 reproduces better the trend observed in the data

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- ✓ Good agreement between $\Delta \phi$ distribution for D mesons and Λ_c^+ for $p_T(D,\Lambda_c^+) > 5$ GeV/c
- ✓ Enhancement observed for NS yield in case of Λ_c^+ wrt D mesons at low D-meson p_T (3 < p_T < 5 GeV/c)







Milestone #2, HF [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100%





- ✓ Good agreement between $\Delta \phi$ distribution for D mesons and Λ_c^+ for $p_T(D, \Lambda_c^+) > 5$ GeV/c
- ✓ Enhancement observed for NS yield in case of Λ_c^+ wrt D mesons at low D-meson p_T (3 < p_T < 5 GeV/c)
- ✓ PYTHIA8 CR-BLC 2, which provides a fair description for Dmeson-hadron correlations (as well as Λ_c^+ -to-D⁰ ratio vs p_T), does not describe Λ_c^+ -hadron correlation NS yields

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Prompt and non-prompt J/Ψ-hadron correlations in pp at 13 TeV - publication (Run2)

Meeting Referee INFN



Milestone #5, DQ [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100%



- Exploit full collected Run2 statistics (MB, HM and EMCal triggered data)
- No significant multiplicity dependence observed within uncertainties

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Prompt and non-prompt J/Ψ-hadron correlations in pp at 13 TeV - publication (Run2)



Milestone #5, DQ [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100%





- Exploit full collected Run2 statistics (MB, HM and EMCal triggered data)
- No significant multiplicity dependence observed within uncertainties
- PYTHIA8 calculations in general show a good agreement with data, but some tension is observed.

Paper published on JHEP (JHEP07(2025)023)

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ALI-PUB-578072



J/Ψ-hadron correlations in pp at 13.6 TeV performance (Run 3)



Milestone #6, DQ [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 100%



- Inclusive J/Ψ-hadron correlation distributions in good agreement with PYTHIA predictions (performance studies performed on pp 2022 data)
- Agreement with Run-2 results in similar kinematic ballpark (but with significantly higher granularity)



Strangeness production in-jet and out-of-jet in pp collisions at 13.6 TeV – preliminary (Run3)





Milestone #9, LF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50%

- Interesting measurement to experimentally characterize the strangeness enhancement observed in small systems
 - pioneering work using Run 2 data
 - Investigate baryon-to-meson ratio in-jet and out-of-jet
 - \rightarrow significantly extend jet p_T reach and granularity wrt Run2 results thanks to the higher available statistics



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Strangeness production in-jet and out-of-jet in pp collisions at 13.6 TeV – preliminary (Run3)



Milestone #9, LF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50%

- Interesting measurement to experimentally characterize the strangeness enhancement observed in small systems
 - pioneering work using Run 2 data
 - Investigate baryon-to-meson ratio in-jet and out-of-jet
 - \rightarrow significantly extend jet p_T reach and granularity wrt Run2 results thanks to the higher available statistics

- Λ-to-K⁰_s ratio exhibits the known enhancement in the UE; no effect observed in the JE direction
- Evolution with multiplicity observed, significantly more pronounced for ratios in the JE direction
- Analysis for multi-strange spectra ongoing



Next steps:

- Complete systematic uncertainty evaluation
- ✓ Implement data driven feed-down for ∧ and multiplicity dependence of efficiencies



Pseudorapidity density of charged particles in pp at 13.6 TeV - publication (Run3)



Milestone #13, LF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50%

WORK IN PROGRESS

Important observable in high-energy hadronic collisions, reflecting both soft and hard scattering processes



Comparison with state-of-art MC models (done also vs multiplicity) suggests that further tuning is necessary in order to reduce the discrepancies

Status: proposal of publication approved by the ALICE Collaboration. Finalization of the draft ongoing.

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energies



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Femtoscopy: short physics introduction





 $2k^* = |\vec{p}_1 - \vec{p}_2|$

 $k^* \equiv$ relative momentum of the pair in its center of mass

 Particles interact with each other during system's evolution -> possibility to access the system properties and interactions among particles by measuring hadron correlations in the final state

$$C(k^*) = \frac{Norm \cdot S(k^*)}{B(k^*)} \xrightarrow{} \text{Same event distribution (signal)}} Mixed event distribution (background)}$$

 Theoretical description of the femtoscopic correlation function is given by the Koonin-Pratt equation [1]

$$C_{th}(k^*, R_{inv}) = \int d^{3r} S(r, R_{inv}) \cdot |\Psi|(r, k^*)^2$$
Source function \rightarrow spatial distribution of particles in a particle emitting source of size R_{inv} \rightarrow study source size \rightarrow study strong interaction potential models

[1] S. E. Koonin, Phys. Lett. B 70, 43 (1977); S. Pratt, Phys. Rev. D 33, 1314 (1986).

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p-p femtoscopy in Pb-Pb at 5.36 TeV (Run3) - preliminary





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p-p femtoscopy in Pb-Pb at 5.36 TeV (Run3) - preliminary





R_{inv} extracted from the CF fits 1



- Smaller effective size for more peripheral events
- ✓ Decreasing R_{inv} with increasing $k_{\tau} \rightarrow$ "explosive" behaviour (less pronounced in more peripheral events)

 $\boldsymbol{k}_{\mathrm{T}} = \frac{1}{2} \cdot \left| \boldsymbol{p}_{T,1} + \boldsymbol{p}_{T,2} \right|$





Production of (anti)nuclei: physics motivations



- Multi-baryon bound states (d, ³H, ³He, ⁴He) including rare (anti)hypernuclei (consisting of nucleons and hyperons, e.g ³_AH, ⁴_AHe) observed in high-energy collisions
- ✓ Shed light on production mechanisms → need systematic measurements of (anti)nuclei in different collision systems to test production models

Two competing models:

- Statistical Hadronization Model (SHM): primordial yields of hadrons (including nuclei) at chemical freeze-out calculated using the hadronic partition function
- Coalescence model: bound states formed by coalescence if nucleons / hyperons are close in phase-space at the kinetic freeze-out



 Contribute to cosmic-ray physics and dark-matter searches → modelling the production of anti-nuclei in pp collisions can provide constraints to DM models



1





ALI-PREL-570670

✓ ³He flow measured in Run3: more precise and more differential measurement wrt the existing results from Run2

- Results compatible with ${}^{3}_{\Lambda}$ He flow (first ever measurement of the ${}^{3}_{\Lambda}$ He elliptic flow)
- Data described by hybrid model using hydro + coalescence

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Antideuteron-net- Λ correlations in Pb-Pb at 5.02 TeV (Run2) - publication



Milestone #14, CF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50

- Disentangle thermal production vs coalescence using event-by-event fluctuation observables
- Antideuteron-antiproton correlation has two possible sources of correlation:
 - (1) baryon number conservation(2) coalescence



ALICE, Phys. Rev. Lett. 131, (2023) 041901

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Cumulants $\kappa_1 = \langle n \rangle$ Mean value $\kappa_2 = \langle (n - \langle n \rangle)^2 \rangle$ (Co)variance $\rho_{ab} = \langle (n_a - \langle n_a \rangle)(n_b - \langle n_b \rangle) \rangle / \sqrt{\kappa_{2a}\kappa_{2b}}$

Pearson coefficient: sensitive to correlations between (net) particles of species a and b originating from quantum numbers conservation

- Statistical hadronization model can describe the data but only with a relatively smaller correlation volume (1.6 dV/dy) than other hadrons (3 dV/dy)
- Model C that incorporate deuteron production from the coalescence with V_c = 3 dV/dy gives more consistent picture with other hadrons

 V_c = correlation volume -> volume in which charges are conserved (expressed in units of rapidity)



Antideuteron-net-Λ correlations in Pb-Pb at 5.02 TeV (Run2) - publication



Milestone #14, CF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 509

- Disentangle thermal production vs coalescence using event-by-event fluctuation observables
- Antideuteron-antiproton correlation has two possible sources of correlation: (1) baryon number conservation
 - (2) coalescence

- ✓ Antideuteron–(net)∧ only sensitive to baryon number conservation (deuterons are not produced from the coalescence of ∧ barion)
- $V_c = 3.0 \, dV/dy$ w/ coal. $V_c = 3.0 \, dV/dy$ w/o coal. $V_c = 1.6 \, dV/dy$



- Antideuteron–(net)Λ correlation consistent with Thermal-FIST with V_c = 3 dV/dy (w/ and w/o coalescence)
- Antideuteron-antiproton correlation consistent with Thermal-FIST with V_c = 3 dV/dy only when coalescence is included
- Status: paper proposal approved by the ALICE Collaboration. Draft under internal review



✓ Significant difference observed between B_2^{JET} and B_2^{UE} in Run2

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Summary and final considerations



Milestone #1, HF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025] => 100% Milestone #2, HF [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025] => 100% Milestone #3, HF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50% Milestone #4, HF [data prevista completamento: 30-09-2025]=> 100% Milestone #5, DQ [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100% Milestone #6, DQ [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 100% Milestone #7, DQ [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100% Milestone #8, DQ [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100% Milestone #9, LF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50% Milestone #10, LF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50% Milestone #11, LF [data prevista completamento: 30-06-2025]=> 100% Milestone #12, LF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 30% Milestone #13, LF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50% Milestone #14, CF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50% Milestone #15, CF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50% Milestone #16, CF [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025] => 100% Milestone #17, Lumi [data prevista completamento: 31-12-2025]=> 50%

- All milestones well on track, most of them based on Run3 data (14/17)
- 9 out of 17 milestones already completed
- Pending milestones expected to be finalized by the end of the year (no critical case)





✓ PWG-HF and PWG-DQ:

HF	1	31/12/2026	Invio per la pubblicazione della misura del flusso ellittico di adroni con charm in collisioni Pb-Pb semi-centrali
HF	2	31/12/2026	Invio per la pubblicazione della misura di correlazioni angolari tra adroni con charm e particelle cariche in collisioni protone-protone con dati del Run 3
HF	3	31/12/2026	Invio per la pubblicazione della misura della produzione di adroni con charm in stati eccitati
HF	4	30/6/2026	Misura preliminare della dipendenza dalla centralità del flusso ellittico di adroni con charm con dati Pb-Pb 2023+2024
DQ	5	31/12/2026	Invio a rivista per la pubblicazione dell'analisi del rapporto di Psi(2S)/Jpsi a rapidità in avanti in collisioni pp a 13.6 TeV
DQ	6	31/12/2026	Invio a rivista per la pubblicazione dell'analisi della polarizzazione delle J/psi da fotoproduzione in collisioni Pb-Pb periferiche a 5.02 TeV per nucleone
DQ	7	30/6/2026	Risultati preliminari sulla frazione corretta di J/psi da beauty a rapidità centrale in collisioni protone-protone a 13.6 TeV
DQ	8	31/12/2026	Invio a rivista per la pubblicazione dell'analisi di produzione di prompt e non-prompt J/psi in jets a rapidità centrale in collisioni protone-protone a 13 TeV

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✓ PWG-LF, PWG-CF and luminosity PAG

LF	9	31/12/2026	Invio a rivista dell'analisi sugli spettri π-K-p in pp @ 13.6 TeV
			Invio a rivista/pubblicazione su rivista dell'analisi sulla produzione di barione Sigma-
LF	10	31/12/2026	in collisioni pp e p-Pb a 5.02 TeV
LF	11	31/12/2026	Invio a rivista dell'analisi sulla produzione di barioni strani in funzione della molteplicita' di particelle cariche in collisioni pp a 5.02 TeV
			Invia par la pubblicazione della misure dei sumulanti di ordine elevate del numero
CF	12	31/12/2026	netto di protoni in collisioni pp a 13 TeV
Lumi	13	31/12/2026	Risultati preliminari vdM scans del 2024











Hadronization in PYTHIA

[Altmann et al., https://arxiv.org/pdf/2405.19137]



- Color Reconnection among partons belonging to different MPIs → In the Leading Color (CR-LC) limit (Monash 2013, default tune) only "dipole" string configurations are allowed
 - characterized by two endpoints, typically a colour and an anti-colour charge endpoint (can have any number of intermediate gluons between them which form "kinks" on the string)

- Color Reconnection beyond Leading Color (CR-BLC): alternative string configurations allowed
 - Junctions provide a new mechanisms to produce baryons (in the LC approximation baryons are only produced via diquark creation next to a heavy-flavour endpoint)





- Quark (re-)combination mechanism (QCM)
 - Coalescence of charm quark and light flavour quarks close in "phase-space)"
 - Thermal weights for describing relative production of vector and scalar mesons
- ✓ SHM + Relativistic Quark Model [He et al., PLB 795 (2019) 117-121]
 - Hadrons formed according to thermal weights driven by mass at the freezout temperature estimated from Pb-Pb fits (156.6 MeV)

[QCM: Song et al., EPJC (2018) 78: 344]

- Significant feed-down from excited charm baryon states beyond those listed in the PDG: additional 18 Λ_c , 42 Σ_c , 62 Ξ_c , 2 Ω_c (in the PDG: 5 Λ_c , 3 Σ_c , 8 Ξ_c , 34 Ω_c)
- ✓ **Catania** [Greco et al., PLB 821, 136622]
 - Thermalised systems of light flavour quarks and gluons
 - Charm quark hadronization via fragmentation + recombination with light flavour quarks from the bulk
- ✓ POWLANG [Beraudo et al., arXiv:2306.02152]
 - Expanding fireball assumed in pp collisions
 - Hadronisation via recombination with light quarks
 - Charm baryon formation enhanced thanks to diquark excitations





- ✓ Identified hadrons (including strange hadrons) in heavy-ion collisions are produced in apparent *chemical* and *thermal* equilibrium → "*macroscopic*" description of the system
 - Statistical Hadronization Model to reproduce hadron abundances



- Production of light-flavour hadrons well described by Statistical Hadronization Model (SHM) fit over ~9 orders of magnitude (*Grand Canonical ensemble formulation*)
- Hadron yields can be described as emerging from a hot Hadron-Resonance Gas in thermal equilibrium
 - At LHC: $\mu_{\rm B} \sim 0$, $T_{\rm ch} \sim 156$ MeV
- Precise determination of the parameters thanks to the wide variety of particle yields available with good experimental precision

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