

# The Quark Gluon Plasma: results and prospects with the ALICE experiment

A. Rossi, INFN Padova

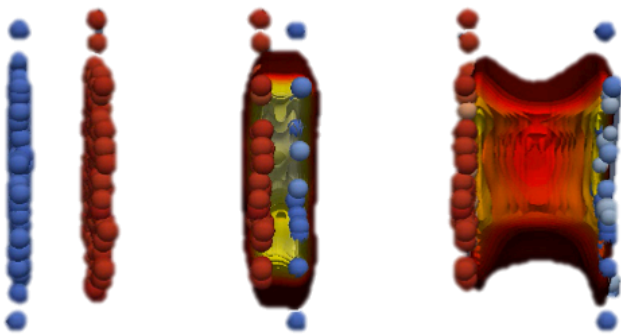
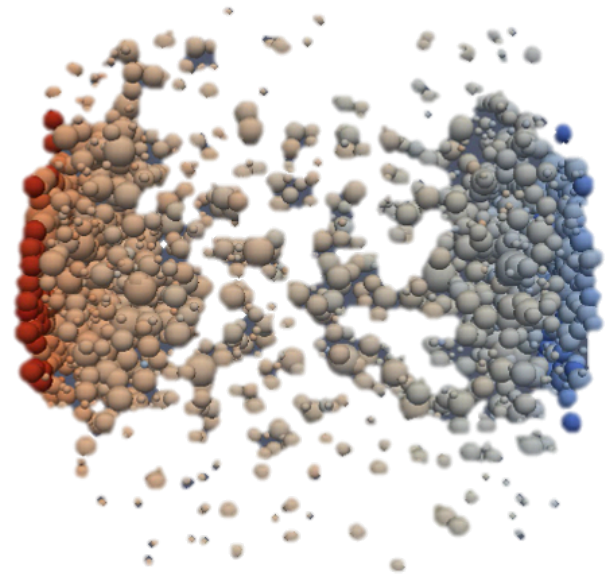
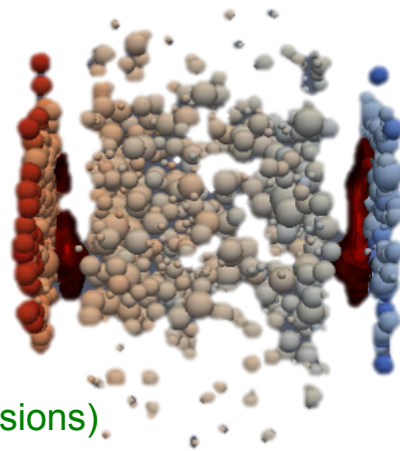
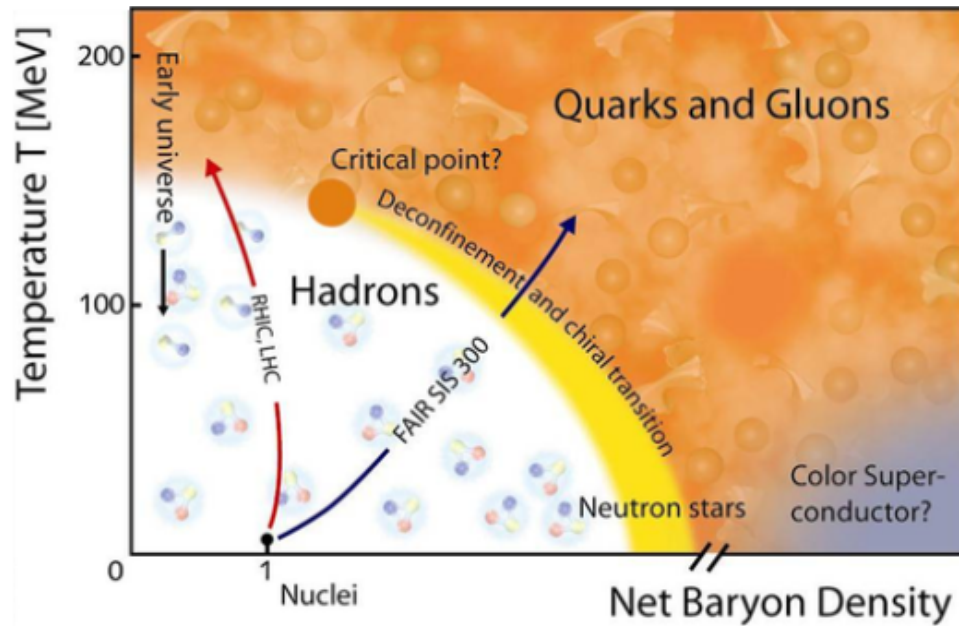


figure credit: Hannah Petersen( Au-Au collisions)



# Phase diagram of strongly-interacting (QCD) matter



At **high energy density  $\epsilon$**  (high temperature and/or high density) hadronic matter undergoes a **phase transition to the Quark-Gluon Plasma (QGP): a state in which colour confinement is removed**

**Phase transition: confined state  $\rightarrow$  deconfined state**

Lattice QCD calculations:

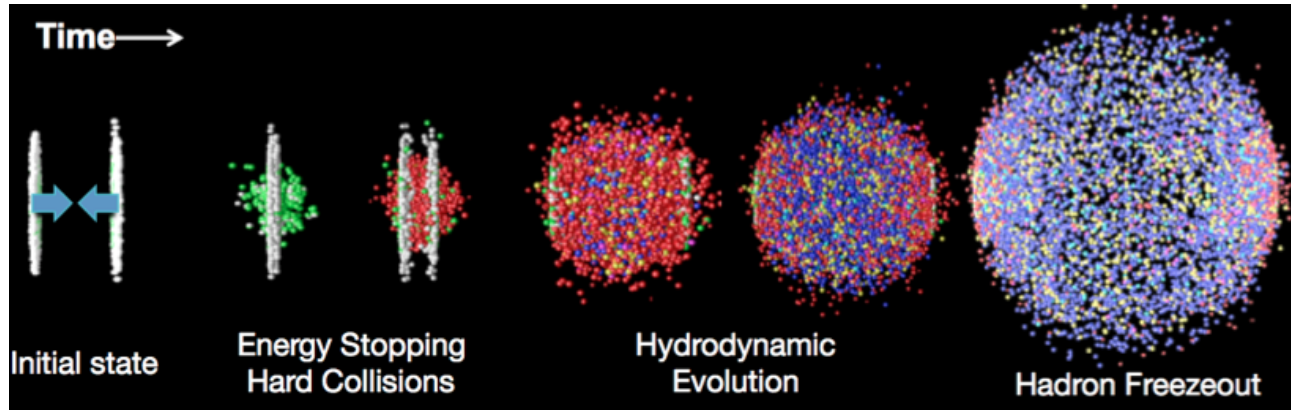
**Critical temperature at 0 baryon density  $\sim 155$  MeV**

**Critical energy density  $\epsilon_c \sim 1$  GeV/fm<sup>3</sup>  $\sim 6-7$   $\epsilon_{\text{nucleus}}$**



# QGP in laboratory: nucleus-nucleus collisions

- Can we form the QGP in laboratory? Need to compress/heat matter to very high energy densities.



- By colliding two heavy nuclei at ultra-relativistic energies we recreate, for a short time span (about  $10^{-23}$  s, or a few fm/c) the conditions for deconfinement
- As the system expands and cools down it undergoes a phase transition from QGP to hadron again, like at the beginning of the life of the Universe: we end up with confined matter again
- **Chemical freeze out:** time at which inelastic interactions cease  
→ abundances of particle species ( $\pi, K, p, \dots$  yields, not resonances) are fixed
- **Kinetic freeze out:** all interactions cease → free streaming of particles to detector

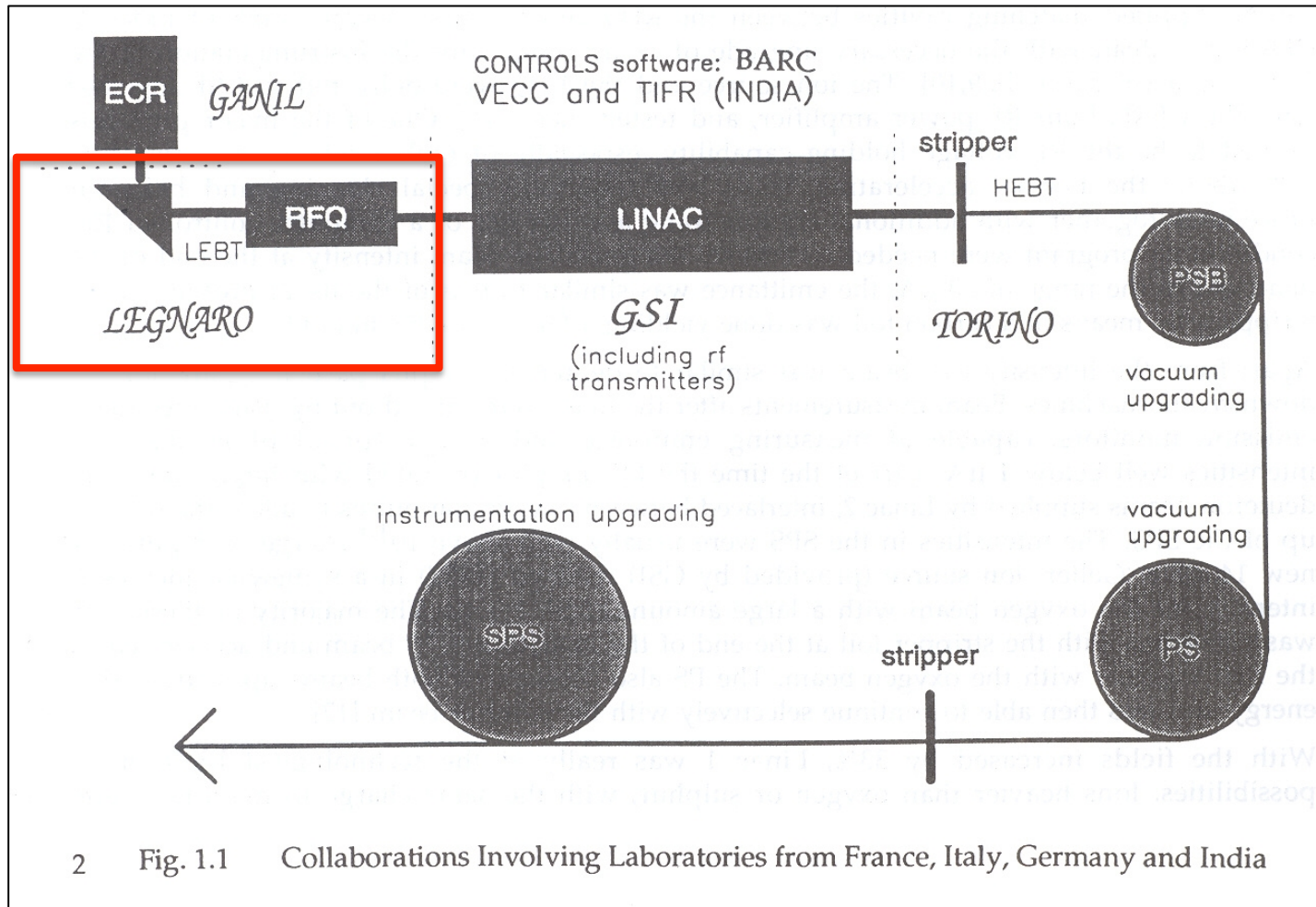
# Ultra-relativistic heavy-ion accelerators

-- only main collision systems are indicated --

- **BNL-AGS**, early '90s, Au-Au up to  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5 \text{ GeV}$
- **CERN-SPS**, from 1994, Pb-Pb up to  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 17 \text{ GeV}$
- **BNL-RHIC**, from 2000, Au-Au  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 8 - 200 \text{ GeV}$
- **CERN-LHC**, from 2010, Pb-Pb  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76 - 5.5 \text{ TeV}$

# Pb-ion facility at CERN

Approved 1990, started operating 1994



# First acceleration stage (LNL)

A Heavy Ion Linac for the CERN Accelerator Complex

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H. Haseroth\*, C. Hill\*, G. Hutter\*\*, J. Klabunde\*\*, H. Klein##, H. Kugler\*, D. Liska###,  
A. Lombardi#, H. Lustig\*, E. Mielitz\*, A. Musso°, H. O'Hanlon\*, G. Parisi#, A. Pisent#, U. Raich\*,  
U. Ratzinger\*\*, L. Riccati#, R. Ricci#, A. Schempp##, T. Sherwood\*, P. Sortais\*\*\*, E. Tanke\*,  
P. Tétu\*, A. van der Schueren\*, M. Vretenar\*, D. Warner\*, M. Weiss\*

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## Abstract

The injector linac required by CERN for heavy ions, e.g.  
 $\text{Pb}^{28+}$ , is being made in collaboration with several

charge state ions, e.g. pulses of  $\text{O}^{6+}$  to  $\text{O}^{7+}$ ,  $\text{Ar}^{10+}$  to  $\text{Ar}^{14+}$ ,  
 $\text{Pb}^{25+}$  to  $\text{Pb}^{29+}$  could be obtained. The phenomenon is stable  
and reproducible and the afterglow peak, dependent on the  
adjustment of the source parameters, is about 2 or 3 times the

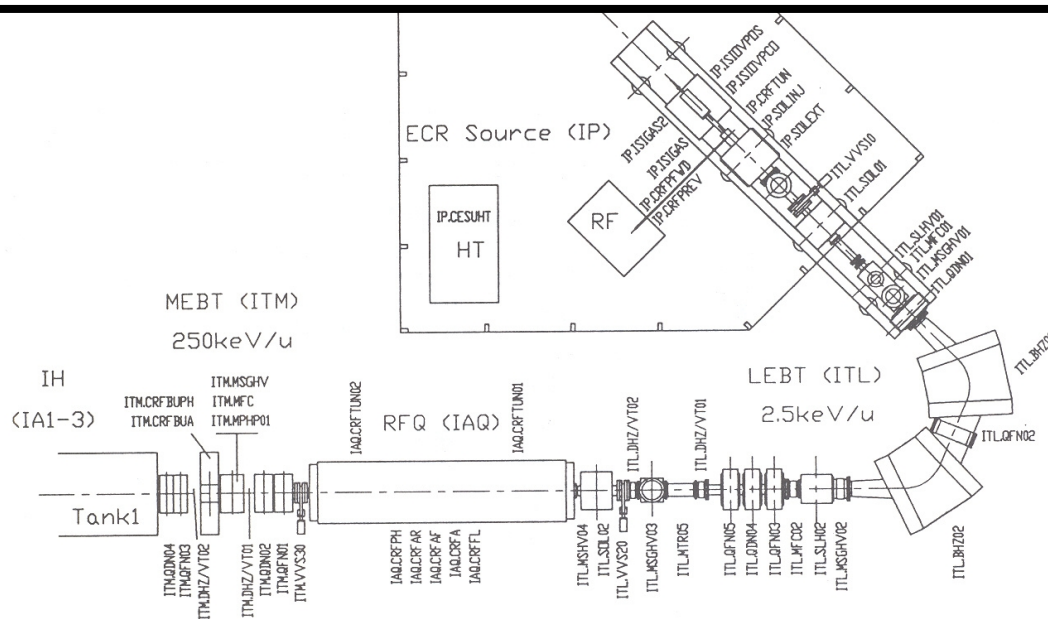
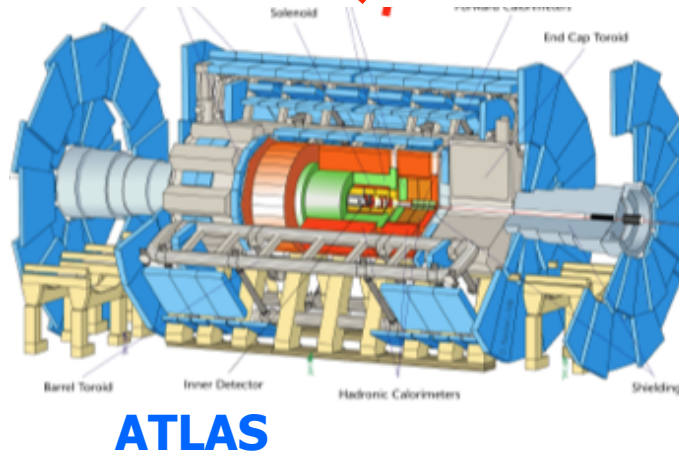
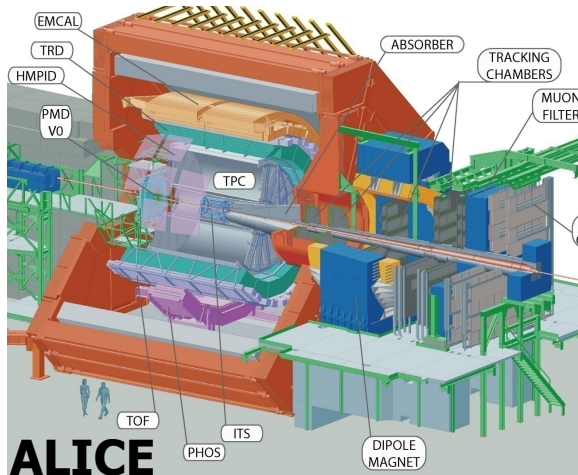
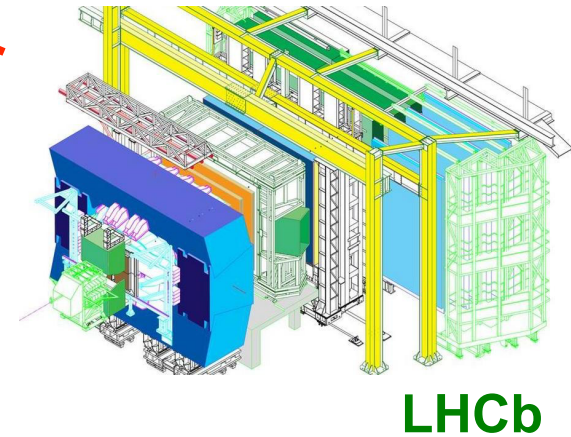
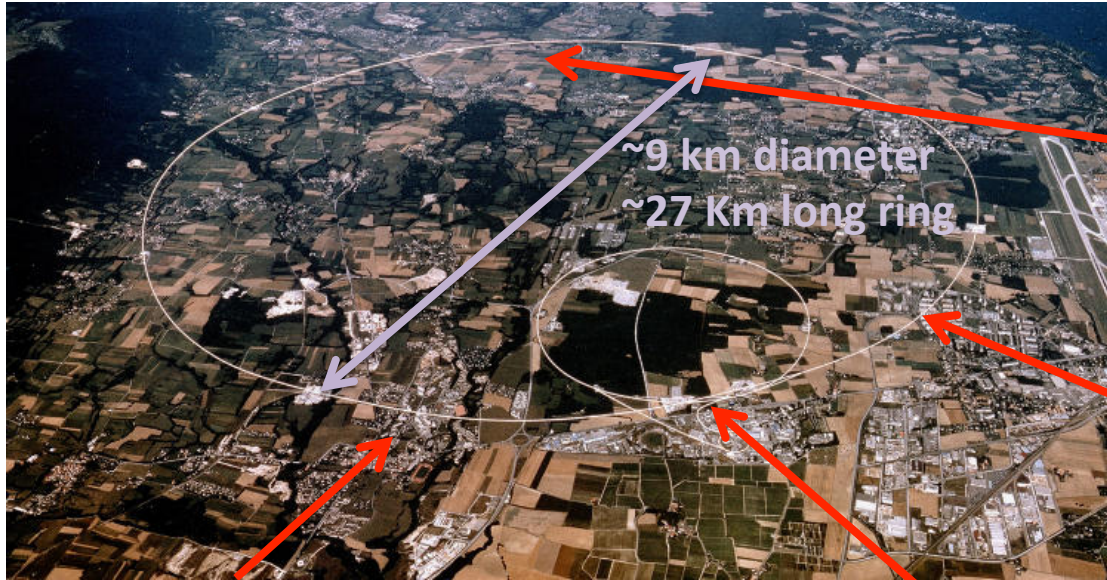


Fig. 2.6 Schematic Layout of LEBT, RFQ and MEFT Region

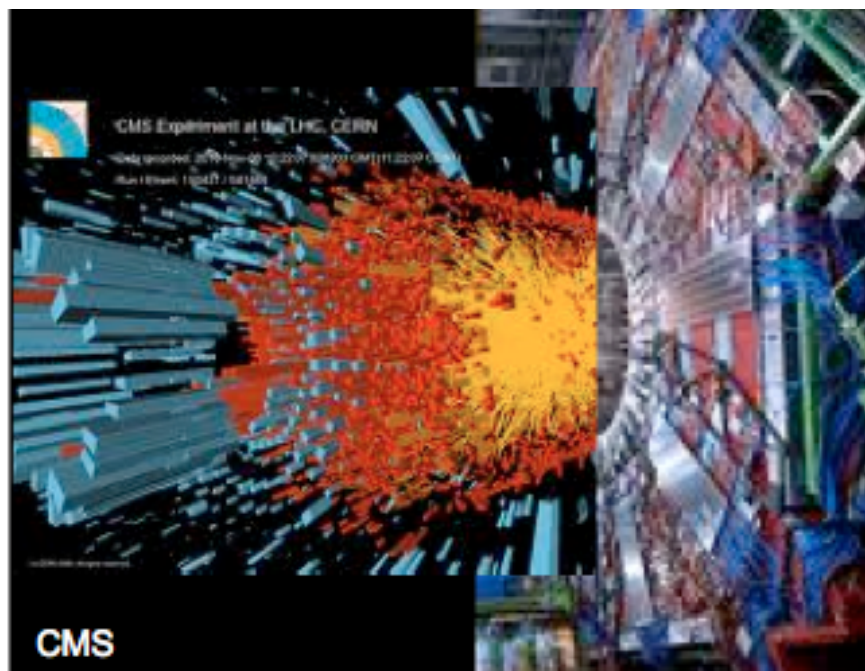
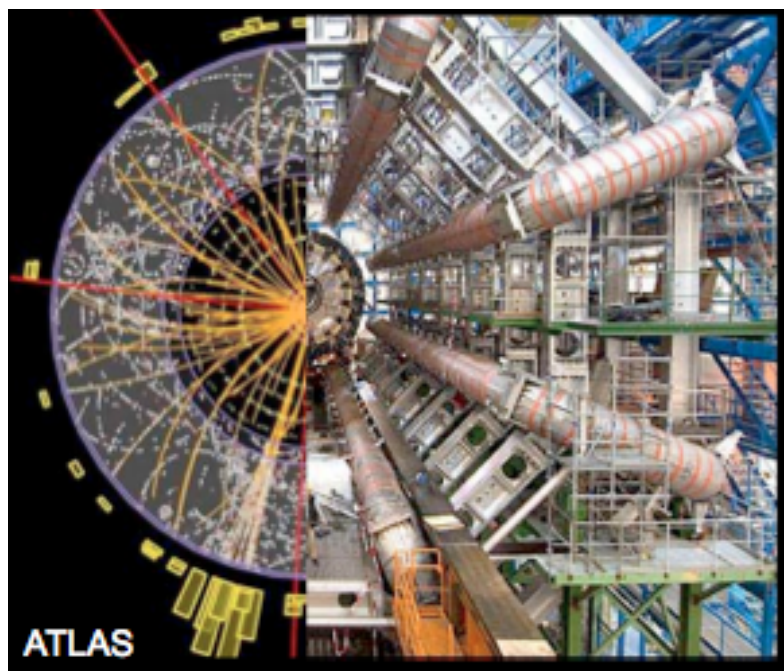
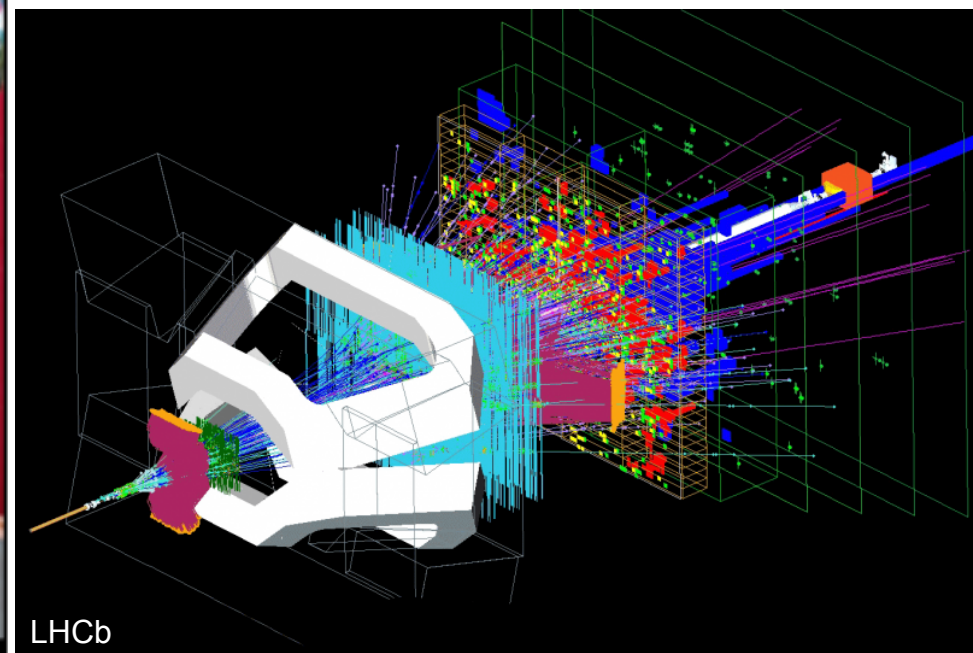
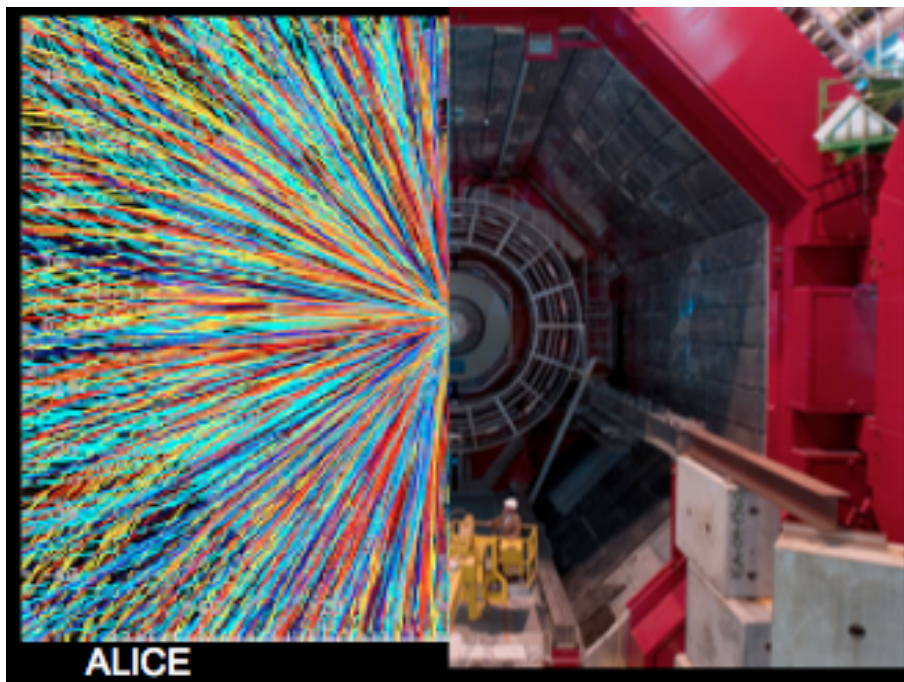
Still in use at the LHC!



# Heavy-ion experiments at the LHC







# The ALICE detector

Central barrel ( $|\eta| < 0.9$ ,  $B=0.5$  T)

Track and vertex reconstruction (TPC, ITS)

Particle Identification

EMCAL

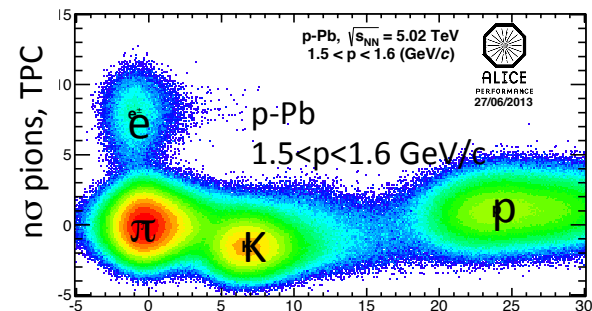
TPC

TOF

ITS

TRD

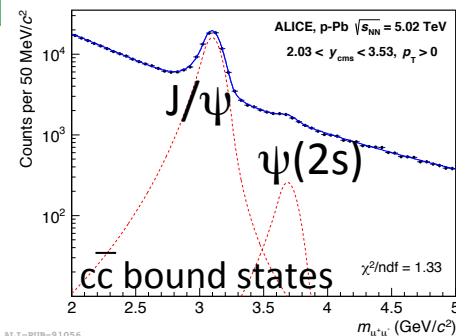
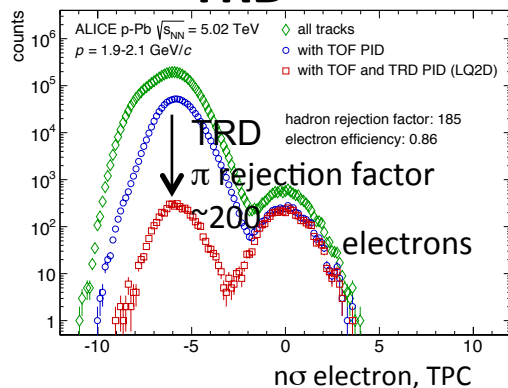
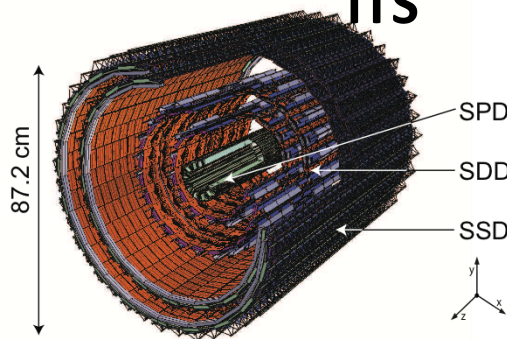
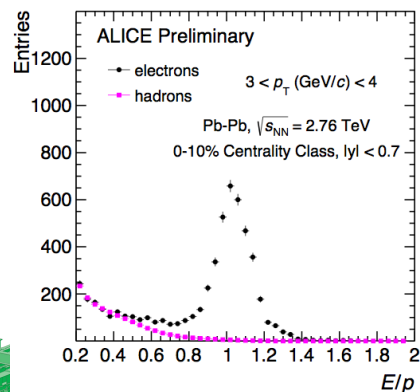
MUON SPECTROMETER  
 $-4 < \eta < -2.5$  ( $2^\circ < \theta < 9^\circ$ )



ALI-PERF-50767

$n\sigma$  pions, TOF

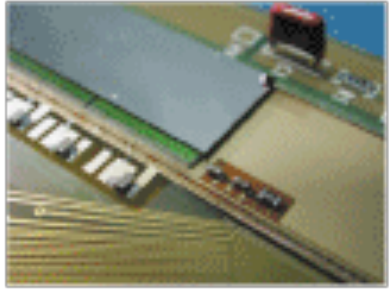
$-1\sigma < (\text{TPC } dE/dx - \langle \text{TPC } dE/dx \rangle) \text{TPC} < 3\sigma$   
 $(\text{TPC } dE/dx - \langle \text{TPC } dE/dx \rangle) \text{TPC} < -4\sigma$



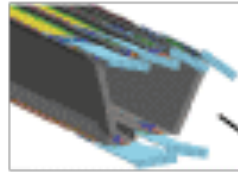


# The Silicon Pixel Detector

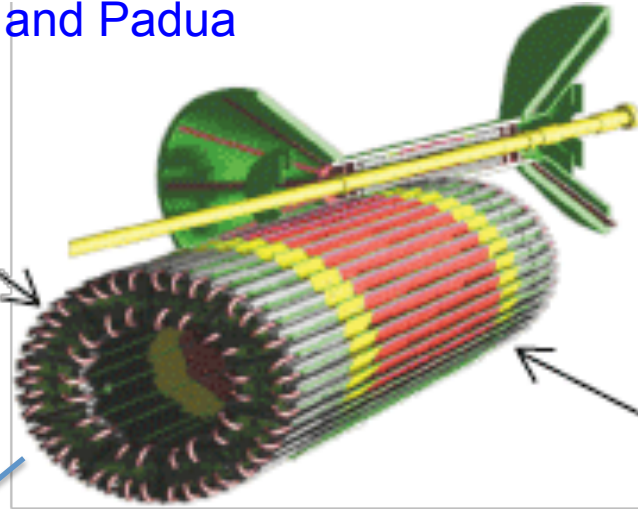
Fundamental contributions from Legnaro and Padua



Photograph of a ladder mounted on a prototype bus



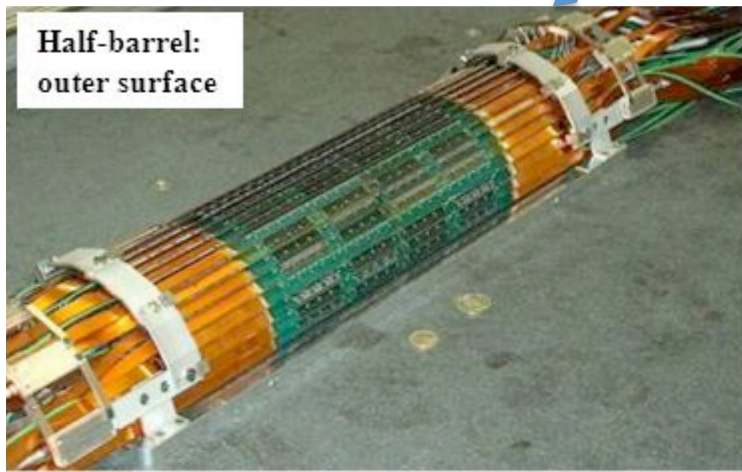
Design of the carbon fiber support of one sector



Schematic drawing of the two barrel layers



Pixel bus with 10 chips (half-stave configuration)



Half-barrel:  
outer surface

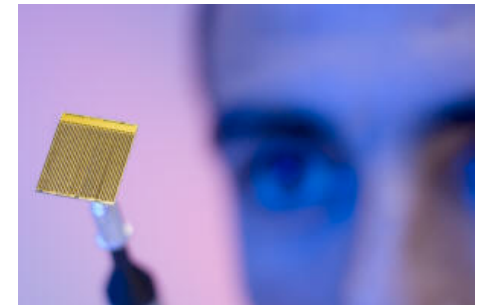
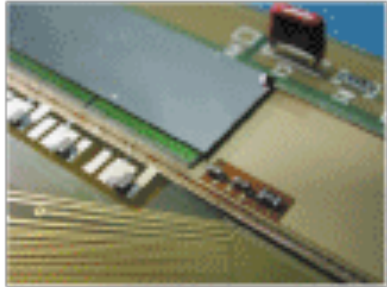


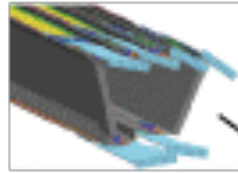
Photo of a chip ( $1.28 \times 1.36 \text{ mm}^2$ ):  
8192 pixel cells ( $256 \times 32$ ) with size  
 $50 \times 425 \text{ } \mu\text{m}^2$

# The Silicon Pixel Detector

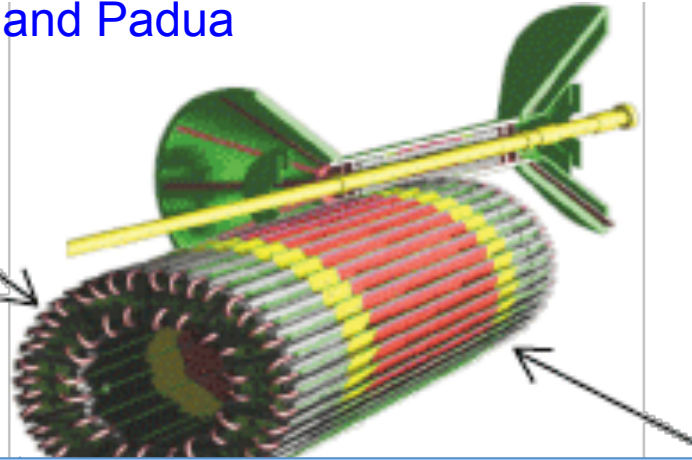
Fundamental contributions from Legnaro and Padua



Photograph of a ladder



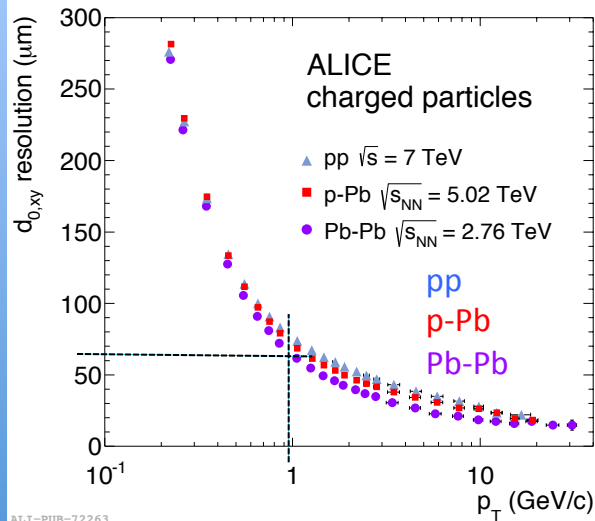
Design of the carbon fiber support of one sector



One of the most important ALICE sub-detectors  
trigger, primary vertex reconstruction, event multiplicity, ...

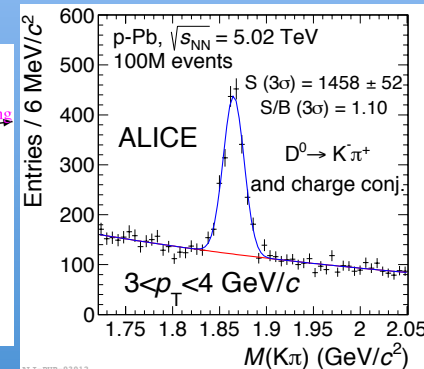
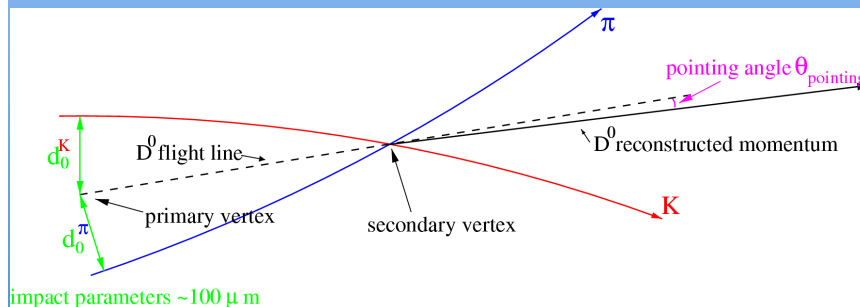
Resolution on track position at the primary vertex better than 70 micron for  $p_T > 1$  GeV/c

**SPD crucial for charm and beauty measurements**



ALI-PUB-72263

Int. J. Mod. Phys. A 29 (2014) 1430044



ALI-PUB-93812

# Few introductory concepts: centrality, $R_{AA}$

**Nuclear modification factor ( $R_{AA}$ ):** compare particle production in Pb-Pb with that in pp scaled by a “geometrical” factor (from Glauber model) to account for the larger number of nucleon-nucleon collisions

$$R_{AA}(p_T) = \frac{dN_{AA} / dp_T}{\langle N_{coll} \rangle \times dN_{pp} / dp_T}$$

Pb-Pb

PP

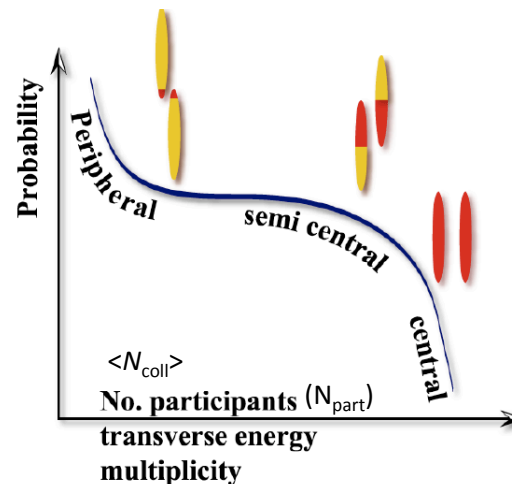
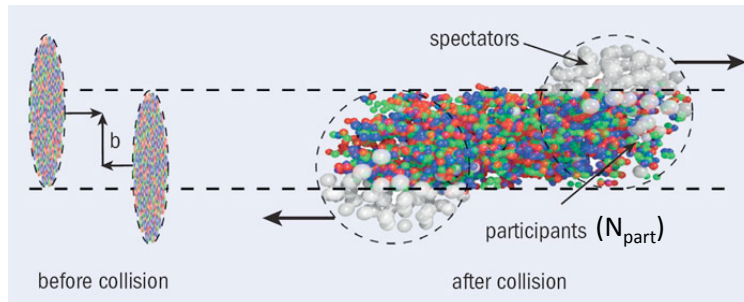
Binary nucleon-nucleon collisions, encodes collision geometry

If  $R_{AA}=1 \rightarrow$  no nuclear effects

If  $R_{AA} \neq 1 \rightarrow$  nuclear effects

Note:  $N_{coll}$  scaling expected to hold only for hard (rare) processes

$\langle N_{part} \rangle, \langle N_{coll} \rangle$  from “geometrical” Glauber model





# Quarkonia and QGP (re)discovery

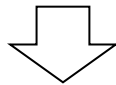
# Quarkonium in the QGP

Bound quark-antiquark states: “charmonia”  $\chi_c, J/\psi, \psi(2S), \dots$   
“bottomonia”  $Y, Y(2S), Y(4S), \dots$

Recall: quark-antiquark QCD potential

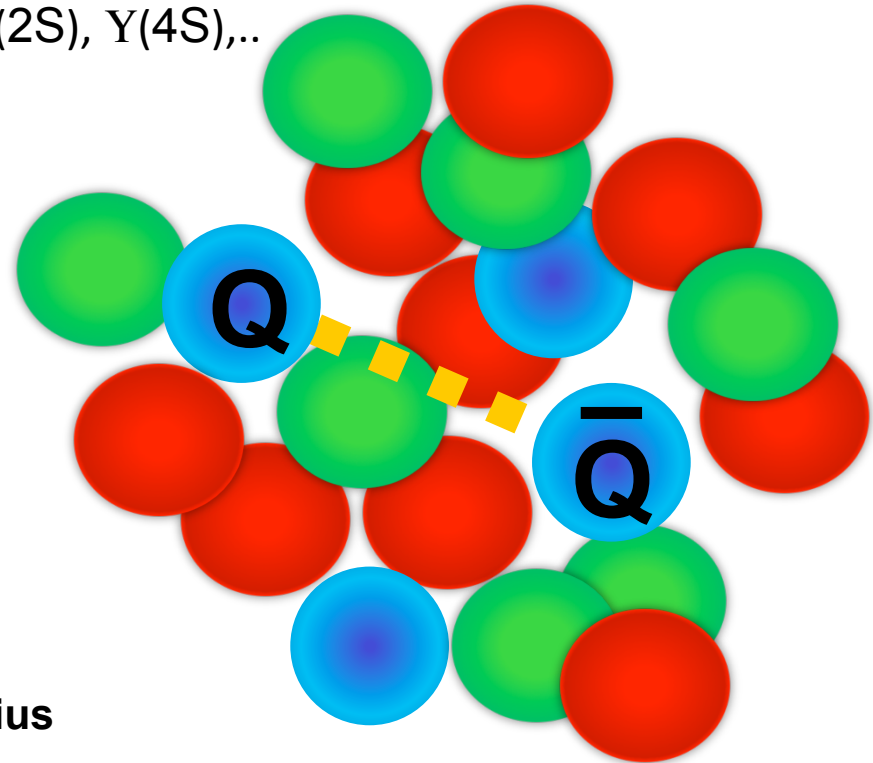
$$V(r) = -\frac{\alpha}{r} + kr$$

The QGP consists of deconfined colour charges  $\rightarrow$  screening effect



$$V(r) = -\frac{\alpha}{r} e^{-r/\lambda_D}$$

$\lambda_D$ : screening radius

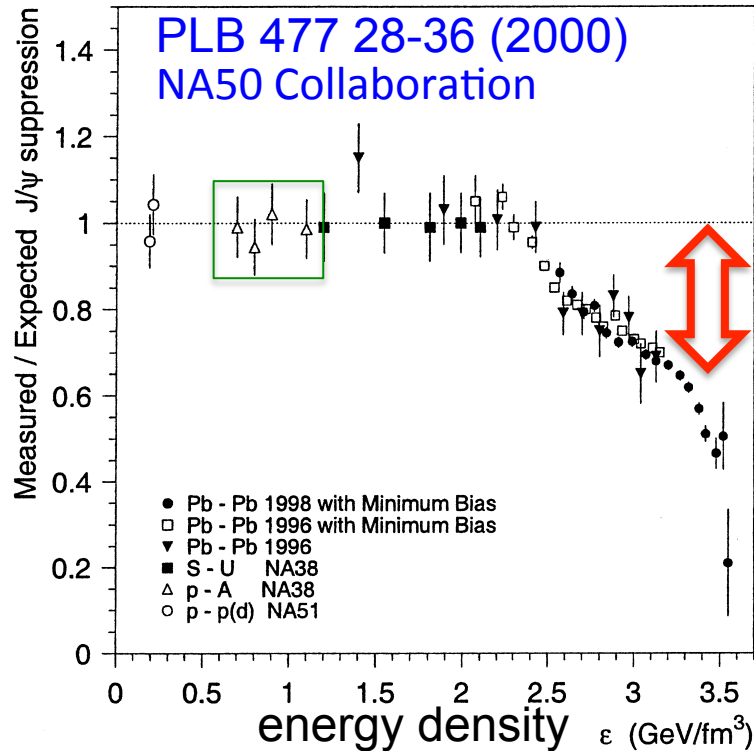


➔ The binding of a  $q\bar{q}$  pair is subject to the effects of colour Debye-like screening:

- the “confinement” contribution disappears
- the coulombian term of the potential is screened by the high color density

# J/ $\psi$ suppression

## -- QGP discovery smoking gun --



N.b. “expected suppression” =  $J/\psi$  absorption in “cold” nuclear matter (no QGP). Not discussed in the slides, but note:  $p$ -A needed as reference

Also previous indications:

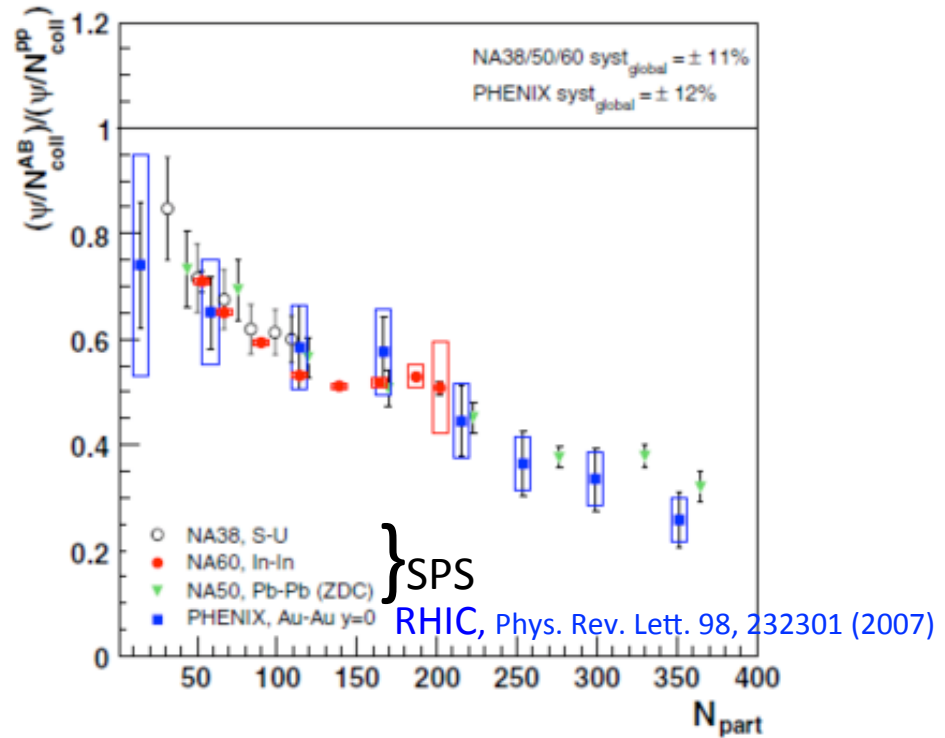
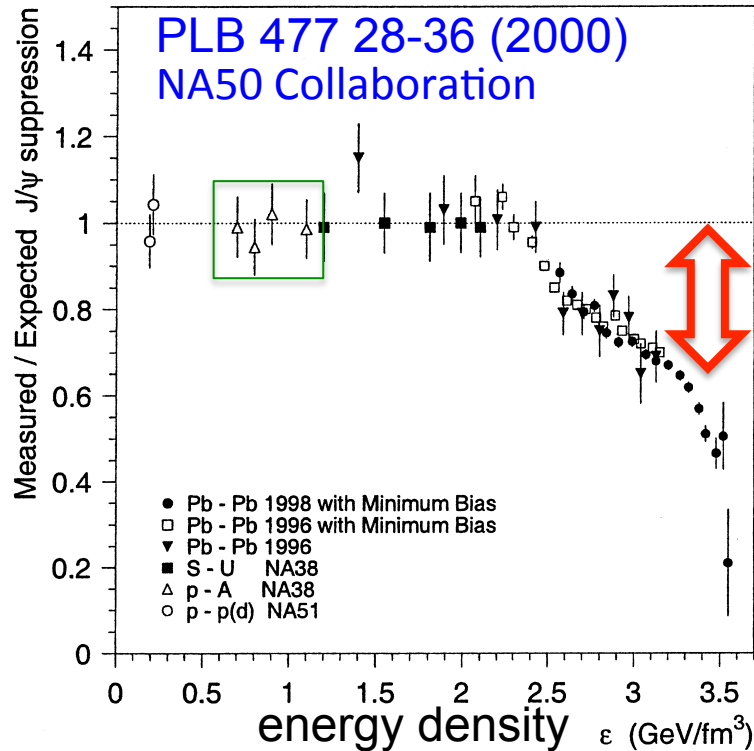
NA51 Collaboration, PLB 438 35 (1998)

NA38 Collaboration, PLB 444 516 (1998); PLB 449 128 (1999)

# J/ψ suppression

## -- QGP discovery smoking gun --

N.B. different quantities plotted on both x and y axes



**Adding RHIC data:**  
**similar suppression than SPS,**  
**despite the x12 larger collision**  
**energy (x2  $\epsilon$ )... unexpected!**

Also previous indications:

NA51 Collaboration, PLB 438 35 (1998)

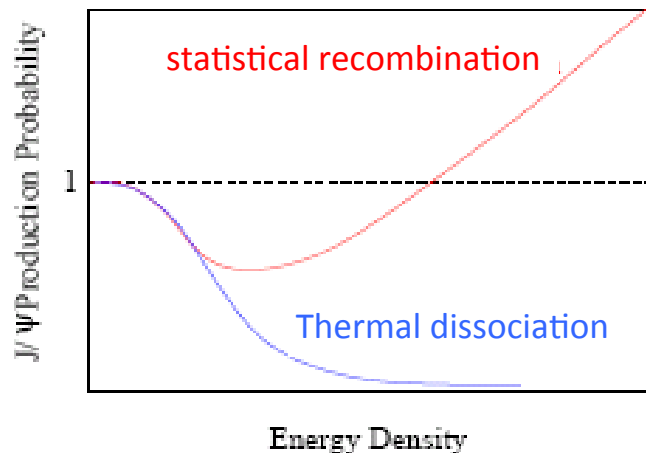
NA38 Collaboration, PLB 444 516 (1998); PLB 449 128 (1999)

# Quarkonium suppression & regeneration

**Hot QGP** → **quarkonia suppression** due to Debye-like screening of QCD  $Q\bar{Q}$  potential (“melting” of bound  $Q\bar{Q}$  states) → **signature of deconfinement**  
(T. Matsui and H. Satz, PLB 178 (1986) 416)

Surprisingly **similar  $J/\psi$  suppression at SPS and RHIC ( $\epsilon \times 2$ ) energies**

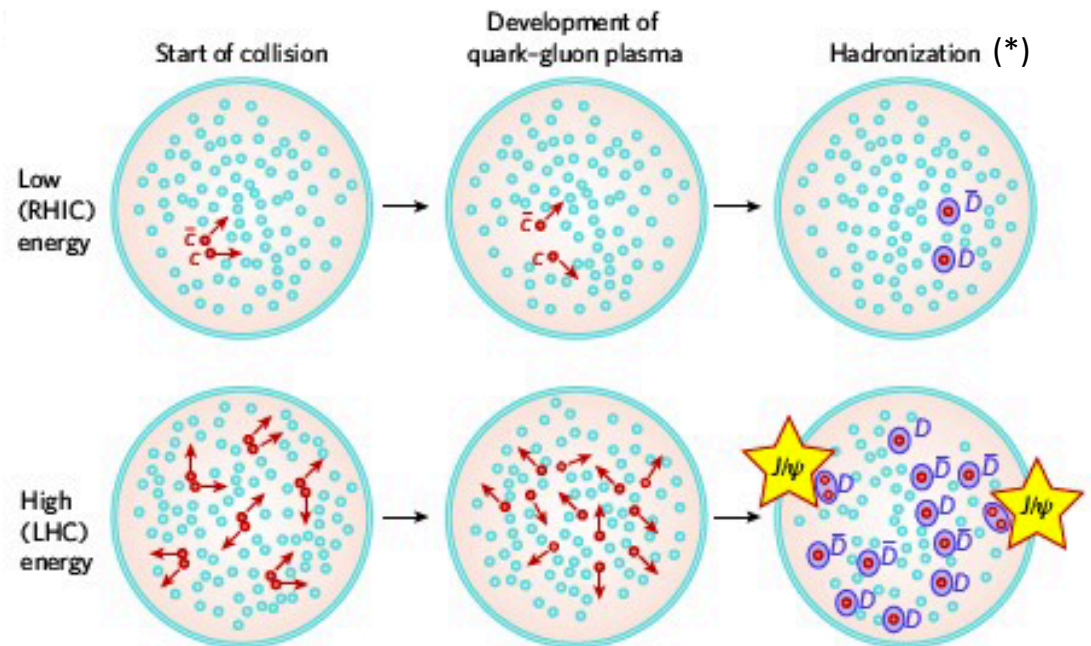
→ Could quarkonia states be **(re)generated via recombination (coalescence) of deconfined quarks**? (P. Braun-Munzinger, J. Stachel, PLB 490 (2000) 196)



## LHC vs. RHIC

Larger energy density → **stronger suppression**

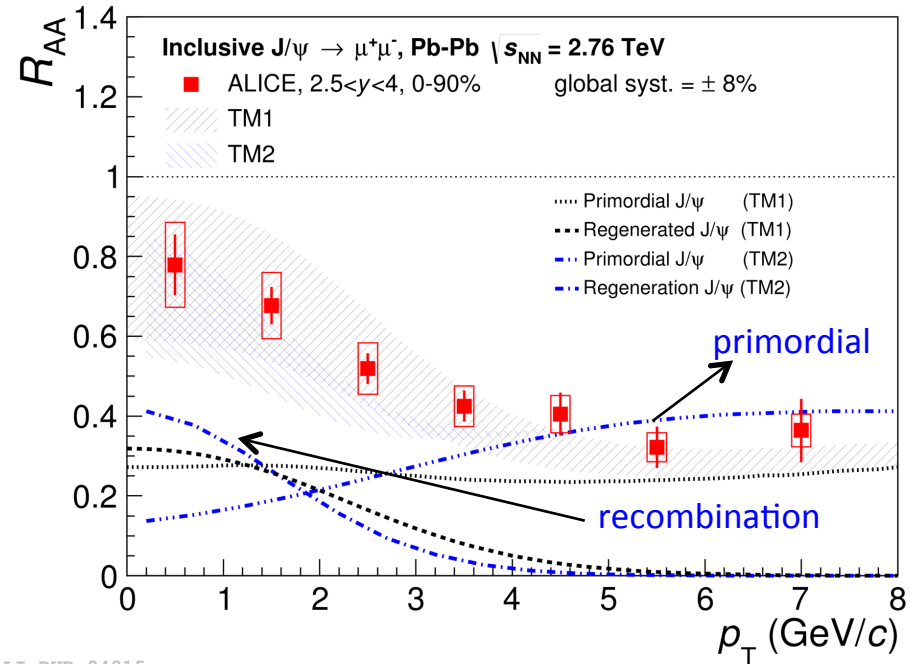
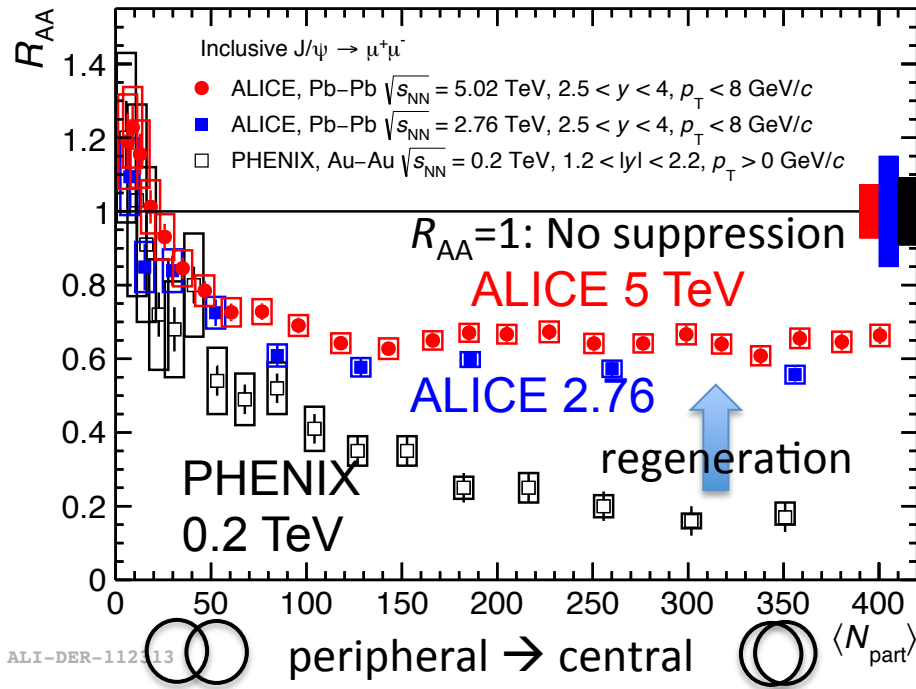
Higher  $c\bar{c}$  multiplicity → **larger recombination**



(\*) Note that “in vacuum”:  
 $(c\bar{c} \rightarrow J/\psi) / (c\bar{c} \rightarrow D\bar{D}) \ll 1$  ( $\sim 1$ -2%)



# J/ψ suppression: LHC vs. RHIC



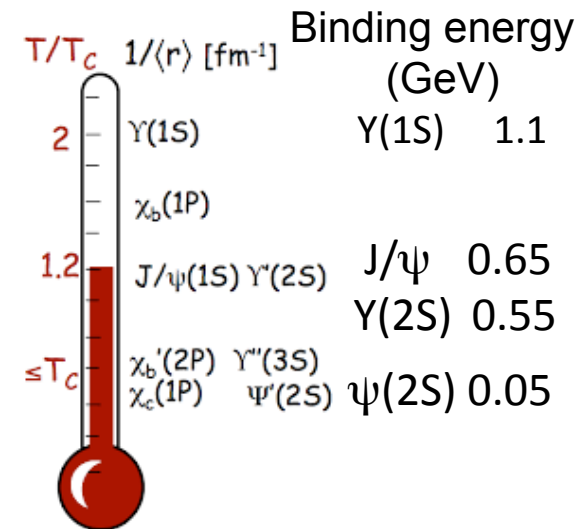
- J/ψ suppression stronger in central events than peripheral
- Smaller suppression at LHC than RHIC
- Analysis vs. transverse momentum: suppression stronger at higher momentum. In agreement with models expecting about 50% contribution of J/ψ from recombination at low  $p_T$ .

**“Twice a signature of QGP”**

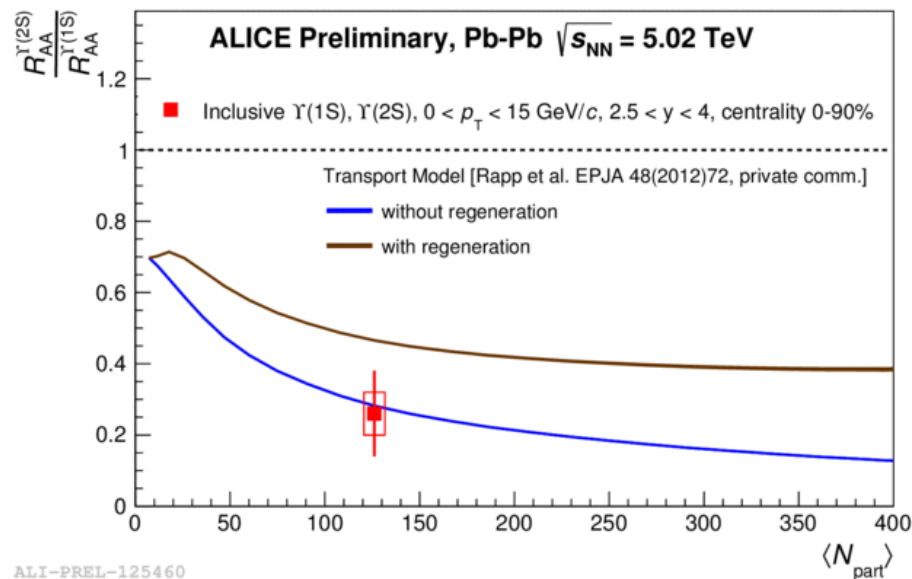
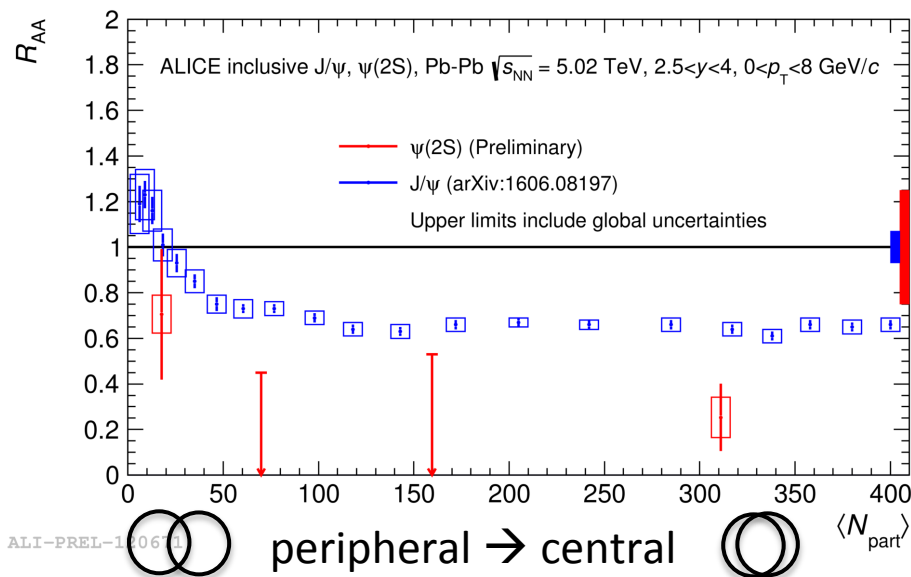
# Quarkonia: sequential suppression

Indication that  $\psi(2S)$  is more suppressed than  $J/\psi$

$Y(2S)$  ~4 times more suppressed than  $Y(1S)$



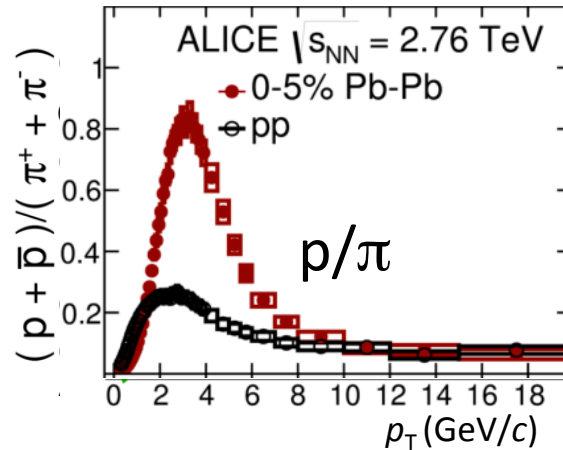
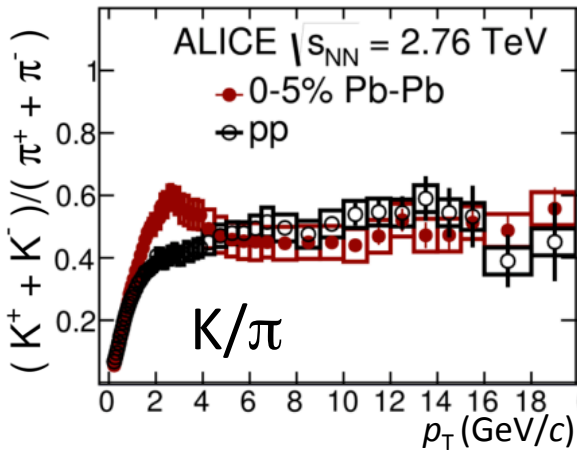
A. Mocsy, Eur.Phys.J. C61 (2009)



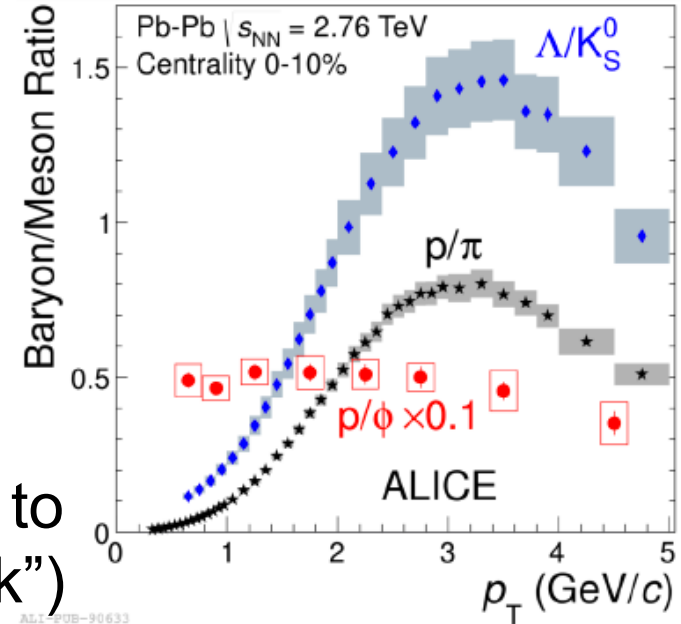
“Soft probes”  
--few selected topics--

# Particle ratios

Phys. Rev. C 93, 034913 (2016)



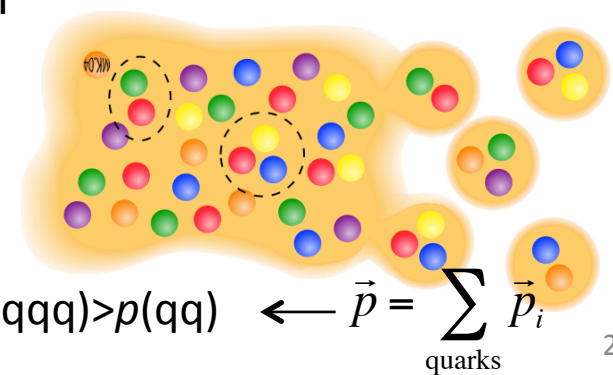
Phys. Rev. C 91 024609 (2015)



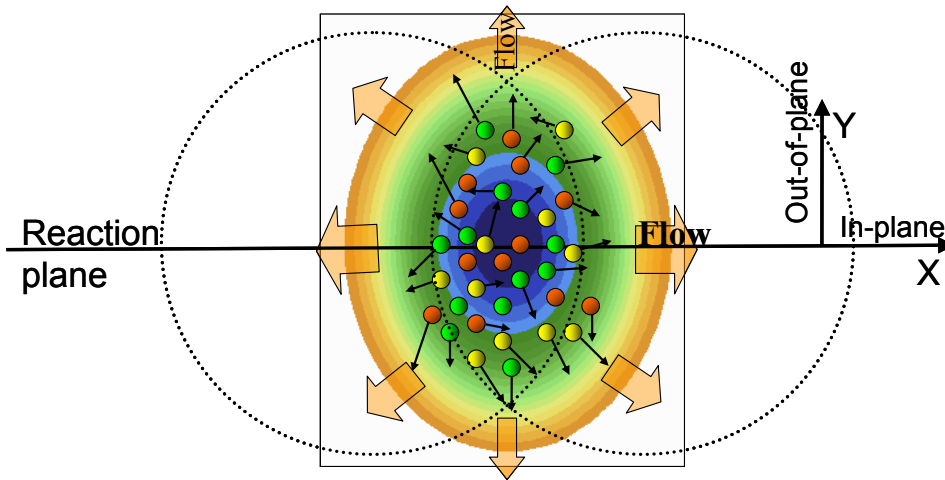
Strong modification of  $p/\pi$  vs.  $p_T$  from pp to central Pb-Pb collisions (“radial flow peak”)

Indication of collective behaviour

- Pressure gradients leads to radial flow
- Same “velocity” boost gives larger momentum to heavier particles
- Alternative/concurrent explanation: hadronisation via quark coalescence  $\rightarrow$  higher momentum for baryons (3 quarks) than mesons (2 quarks): challenged by  $\phi/p$  ratio

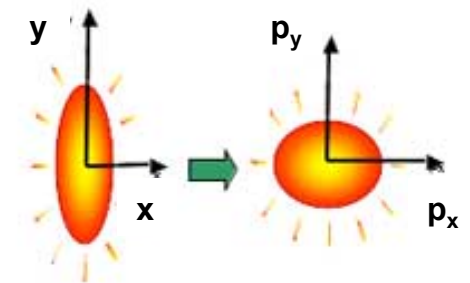


# Anisotropic (Elliptic) flow



Non-central collisions: azimuthal anisotropy of nuclei overlap region

→ Asymmetric pressure gradients transfer the anisotropy to momentum space



→ The transfer of this asymmetry to momentum space provides a measure of the strength of collective phenomena

Effects addressed by measuring the azimuthal distribution of the particles with respect to the “Reaction Plane” → Fourier analysis

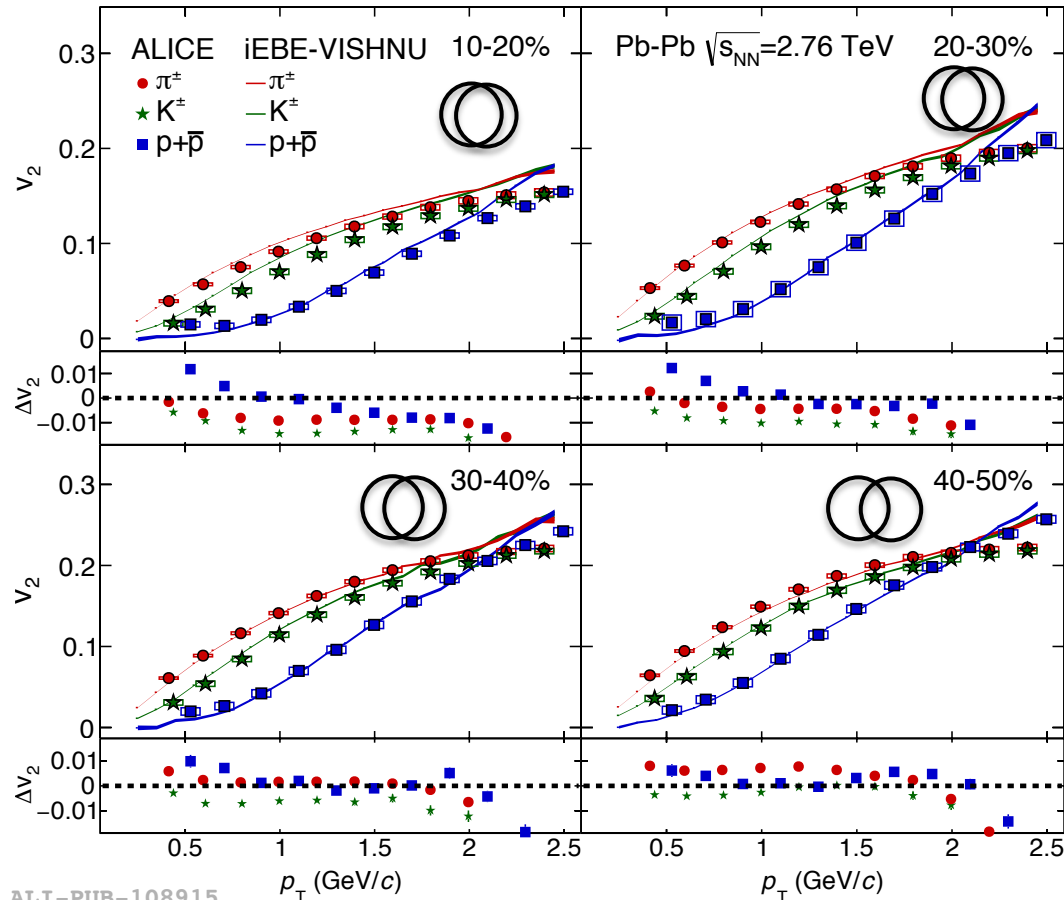
$$N(\varphi) \propto 1 + 2 \sum v_n \cos(n(\varphi - \psi_{RP})) = 1 + 2v_1 \cos(\varphi - \psi_{RP}) + 2v_2 \cos(2(\varphi - \psi_{RP})) + \dots$$

**$v_2$  = Elliptic flow, main parameter**



# Anisotropic (Elliptic) flow

Points= data curves=model



## Elliptic flow ( $v_2$ ) significantly $> 0$

- Evidence of system collective motion
- “Early signal”: develops in partonic phase
- Well described by hydrodynamical models
- Expected trends vs. particle mass

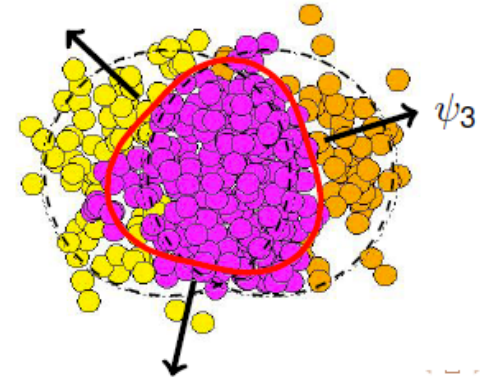
→ **Thermalized partonic system**  
 → (via more detailed comparisons with models) **Data suggest very low viscosity** (← small mean free path)

System behaves as  $\sim$ perfect liquid (the RHIC “paradigm”)

# Constraining further viscosity: higher harmonics

## Initial geometry is not an ideal almond shape

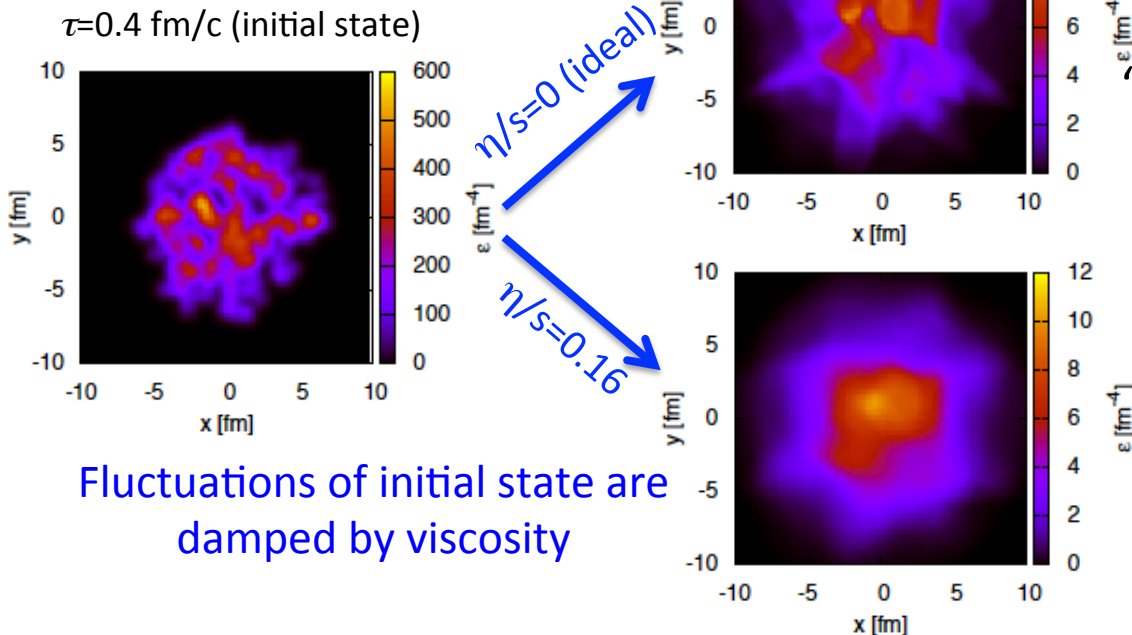
- Fluctuations of initial energy/pressure distributions lead to “irregular” shapes ( $\rightarrow$  need more harmonics to describe them) that fluctuate event-by-event



## Simulation of energy density evolution

(ideal and viscous hydro)

Schenke, Jeon, Gale, PRL 106:042301,2011

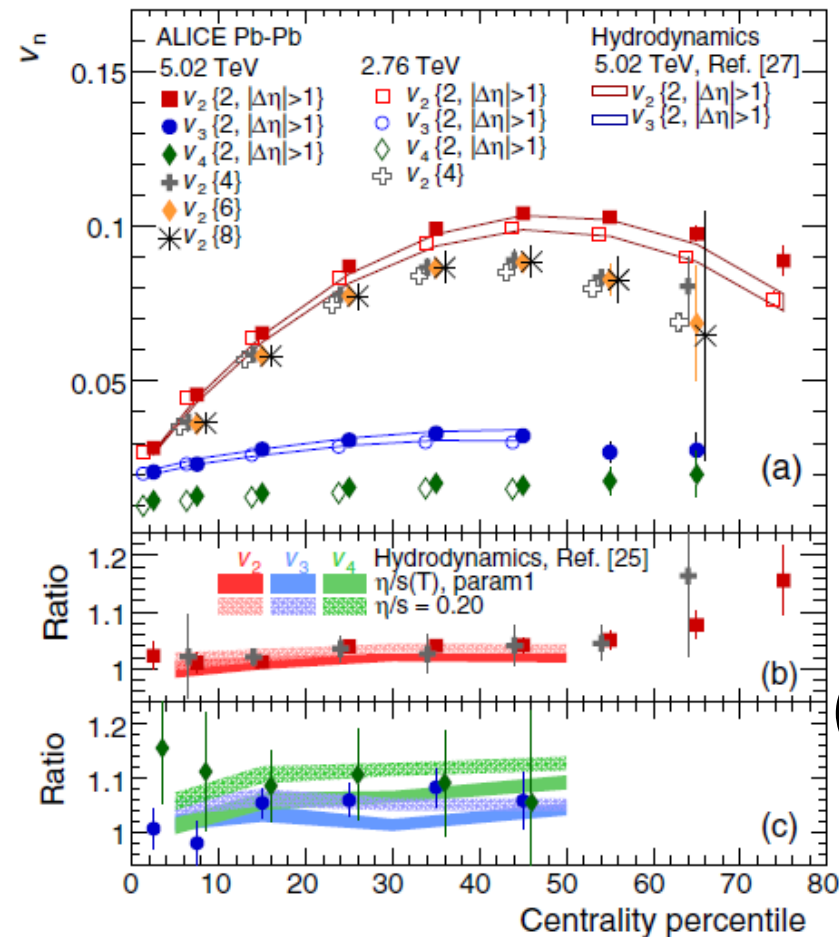


Fluctuations of initial state are  
damped by viscosity

**Viscosity** determines the  
“conversion efficiency” of the initial  
shape into final momentum  
azimuthal distribution

**Higher harmonics add  
sensitivity to the value of  
shear viscosity**

# Constraining further viscosity: higher harmonics



2.76 TeV (Run 1): PRL 107 (2011) 032301

5 TeV (Run 2): PRL 116, 132302 (2016)

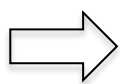
Higher-harmonic coefficients  
significantly non-zero

**QGP viscosity very low  
(lower than any atomic matter)**

High-energy probes → microscopic processes (local interactions) in the medium

# QGP tomography with high-energy partons

- Early production in hard-scattering processes with high  $Q^2$
- Production cross sections calculable with pQCD
- Strongly interacting with the medium

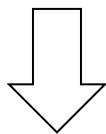


**“Calibrated probes” of the medium**

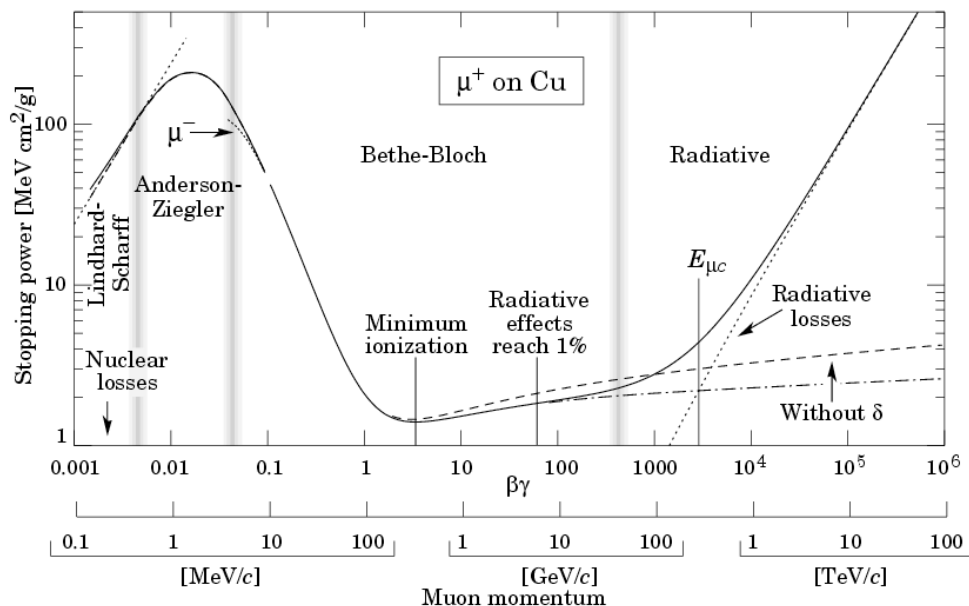
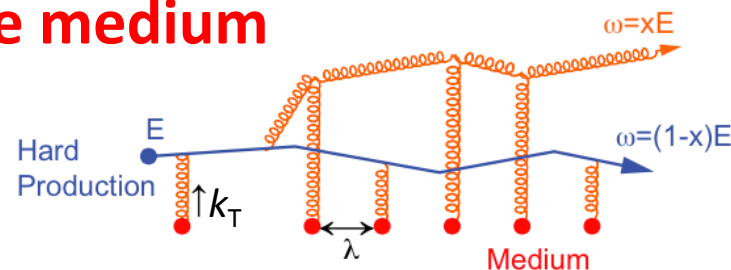
Study parton interaction with the medium

- **energy loss via radiative (“gluon Bremsstrahlung”)**  
**collisional processes**

~ Study QCD “Bethe-Block” curve  
for partons in the QGP

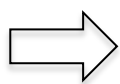


**Connection of “local” interactions  
with global medium properties  
→ Microscopic description of the  
medium**



# QGP tomography with high-energy partons

- Early production in hard-scattering processes with high  $Q^2$
- Production cross sections calculable with pQCD
- Strongly interacting with the medium

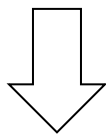


## “Calibrated probes” of the medium

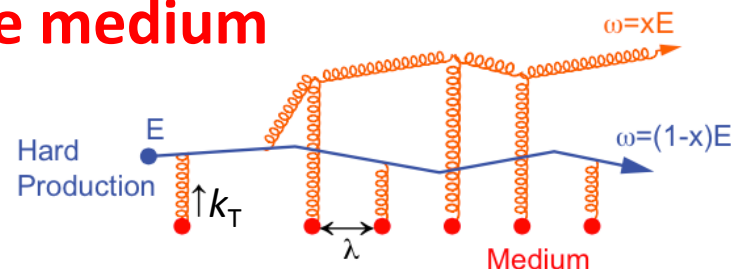
Study parton interaction with the medium

- **energy loss via radiative** (“gluon Bremsstrahlung”) **collisional processes**

~ Study QCD “Bethe-Block” curve for partons in the QGP



**Connection of “local” interactions with global medium properties**  
**→ Microscopic description of the medium**



e.g. in BDMPS-Z formalism\*

$$\langle \Delta E \rangle^{\text{rad}} \propto \alpha_s C_R \hat{q} L^2$$

$$\hat{q} = \frac{\langle k_T^2 \rangle}{\lambda} = \langle k_T^2 \rangle \rho \sigma$$

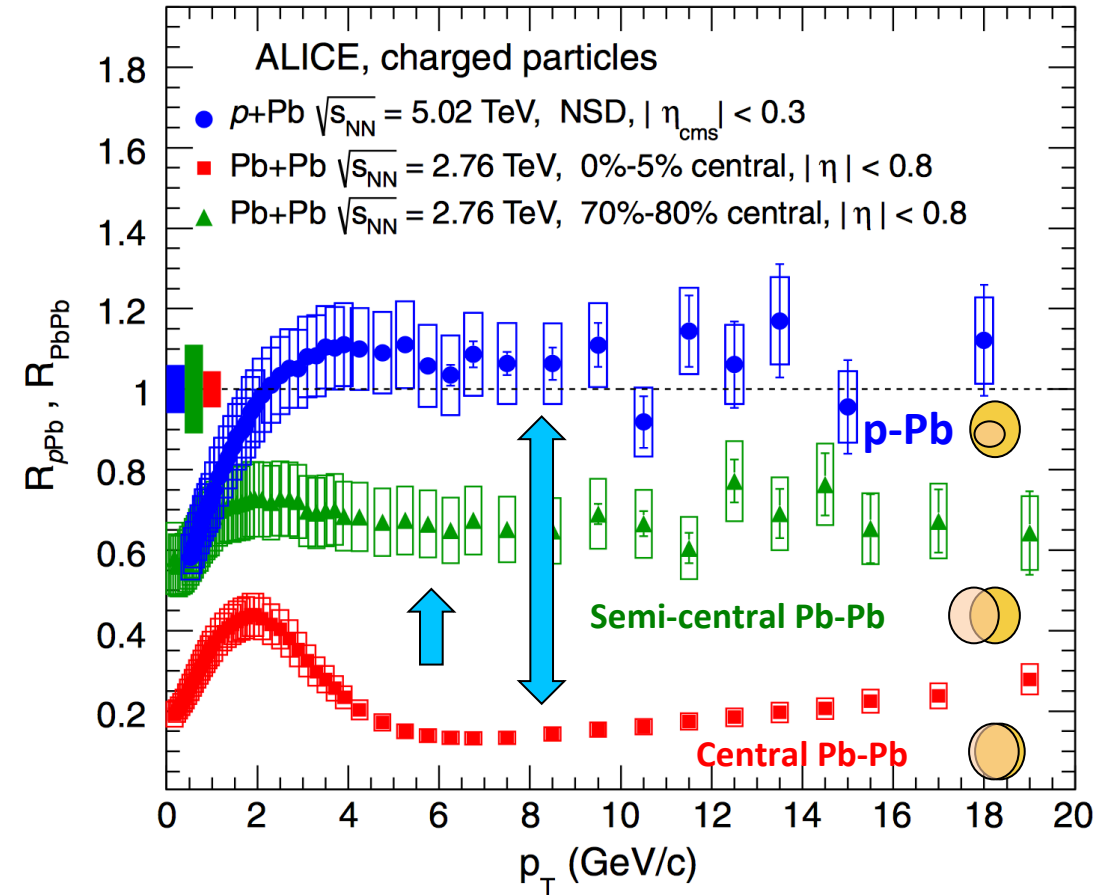
*Transport coefficient(s)*

\*Baier, Dokshitzer, Mueller, Peigné, Schiff, NPB 483 (1997) 29  
 Zakharov, JTEPL 63 (1996) 952.



# QGP tomography with high-energy partons

ALICE, PRL 110 (2013) 082302



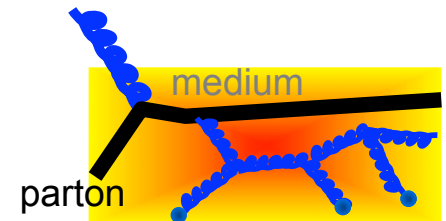
$$R_{AA}(p_T) = \frac{dN_{AA} / dp_T}{\langle N_{coll} \rangle \times dN_{pp} / dp_T}$$

Strong suppression of intermediate/high  $p_T$  particles in central Pb-Pb collisions

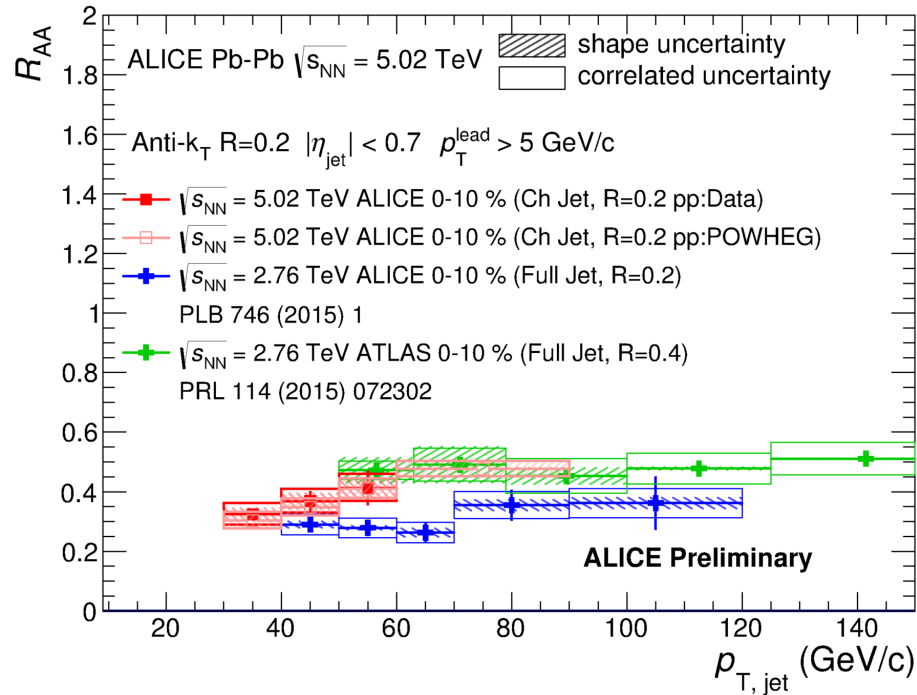
Absent in p-Pb collisions (no QGP expected)

→ final-state effect

→ Evidence of in-medium partonic energy loss



# Jet quenching



Jets are “extended” objects  
 → provide complementary information to single particle observables  
 → Address spatial distribution and kinetic properties of radiated energy

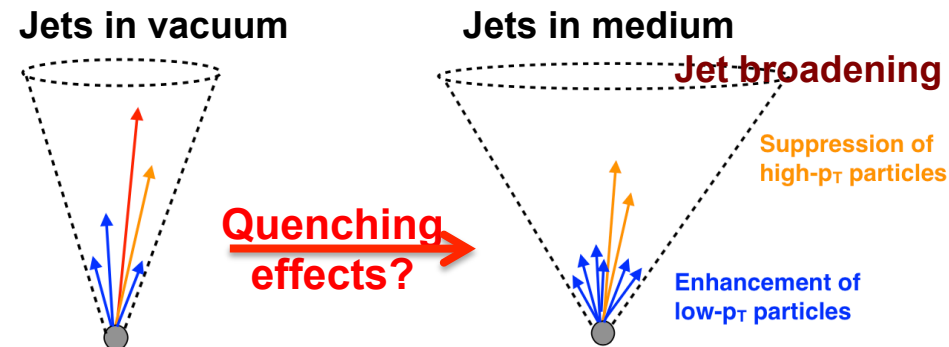
**Jet suppression → Out-of-cone radiation**

ALI-PREL-114186

Is the jet internal structure modified?

- Kinetic properties
- Spatial distribution of jet constituents
- Particle specie composition

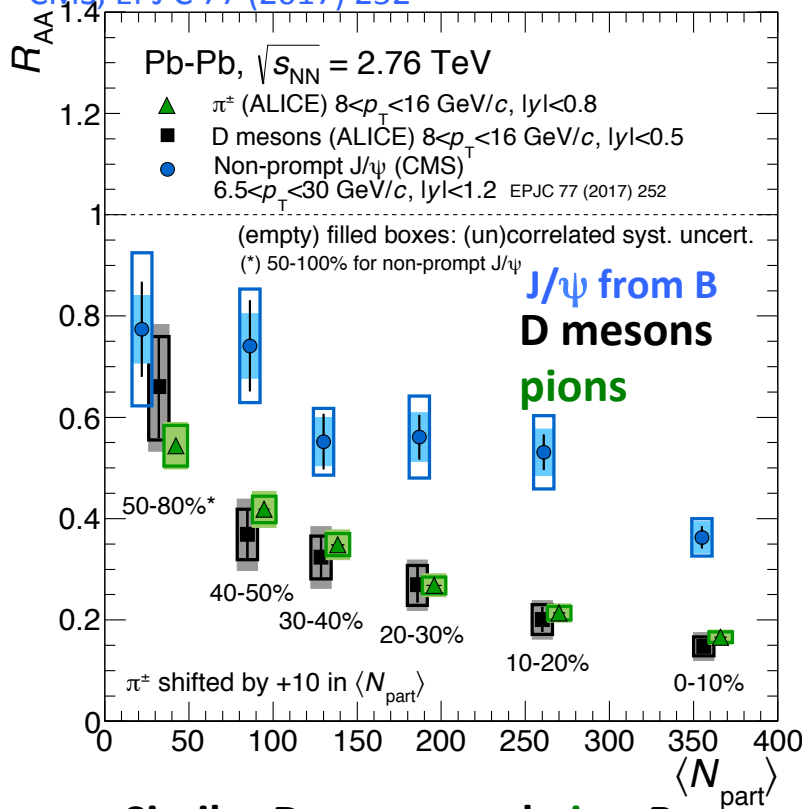
Many studies performed/ongoing



# Open charm and beauty

ALICE, JHEP 1511 (2015) 205

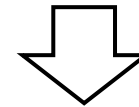
CMS, EPJ C 77 (2017) 252



Similar D meson and pion  $R_{AA}$

Expected from small charm-quark mass  
+ differences between charm and  
gluon/LF spectra slope and  
fragmentation

$R_{AA}(\text{J}/\psi \text{ from B}) > R_{AA}(\text{D})$  in central collisions



Indication of  $R_{AA}(\text{B}) > R_{AA}(\text{D})$

The different suppression and the centrality  
dependence as expected from **models with  
quark-mass dependent energy loss**

$$(\Delta E_g > \Delta E_{lq} \geq \Delta E_c > \Delta E_b)$$

Expected from dead cone effect:

HQ

Gluonsstrahlung probability

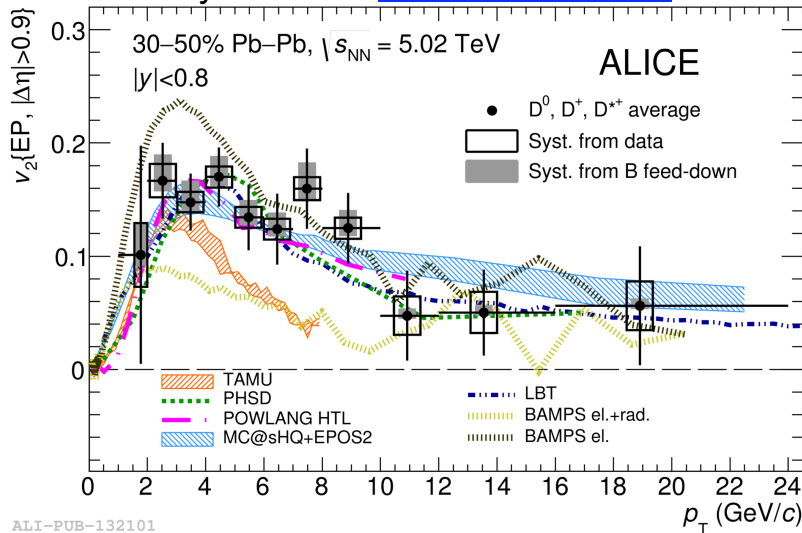
$$\propto \frac{1}{[\theta^2 + (m_Q / E_Q)^2]^2}$$

Dokshitzer, Khoze, Troyan, JPG 17 (1991) 1602.

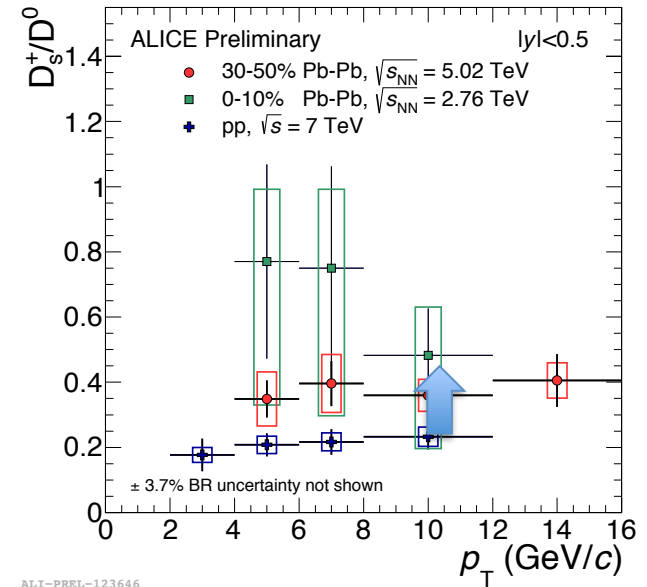
Dokshitzer and Kharzeev, PLB 519 (2001) 199.

# Open charm and beauty

Today on arxiv: [arXiv:1707.01005](https://arxiv.org/abs/1707.01005)



ALI-PUB-132101



ALI-PREL-123646

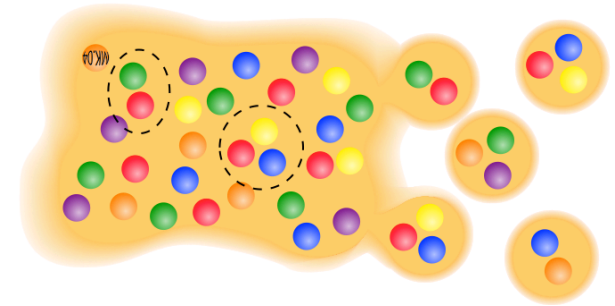
**Charm flows → important constraints to models**

**$D_s$  vs. non strange  $D$ :** modification of particle species abundances?

→ hadronisation via coalescence?

→ Charm participates to system collective motion

→ Possible thermalisation? Need more precision at low  $p_T$



# Prospects for the future



# ALICE data-taking in Run-2

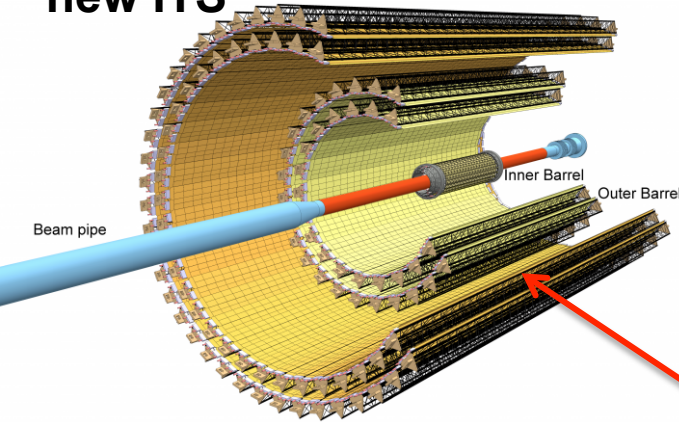
System	Year	$\sqrt{s_{NN}}$ (TeV)	$L_{int}$
pp	2015-2016	13	$\sim 14 \text{ pb}^{-1}$
pp	2015 ( $\sim 4$ days)	5.02	$\sim 100 \text{ nb}^{-1}$
p-Pb	2016	5.02	$\sim 3 \text{ nb}^{-1}$
p-Pb	2016	8.16	$\sim 20 \text{ nb}^{-1}$
Pb-p	2016	8.16	$\sim 20 \text{ nb}^{-1}$
Pb-Pb	2015	5.02	$\sim 0.4 \text{ nb}^{-1}$

- Goals for 2017-18:
  - Pb-Pb: reach 1/nb target
  - pp 13 TeV: reach 40/pb target
  - High statistics pp 5 TeV sample

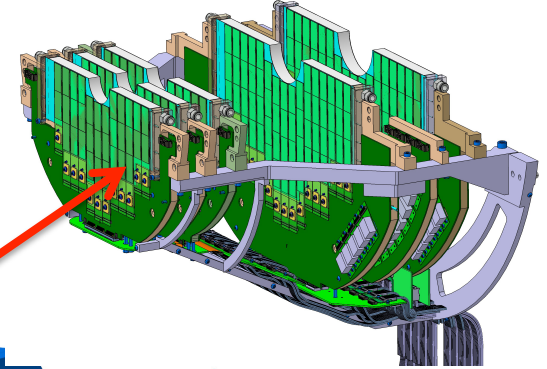


# ALICE after Run-2

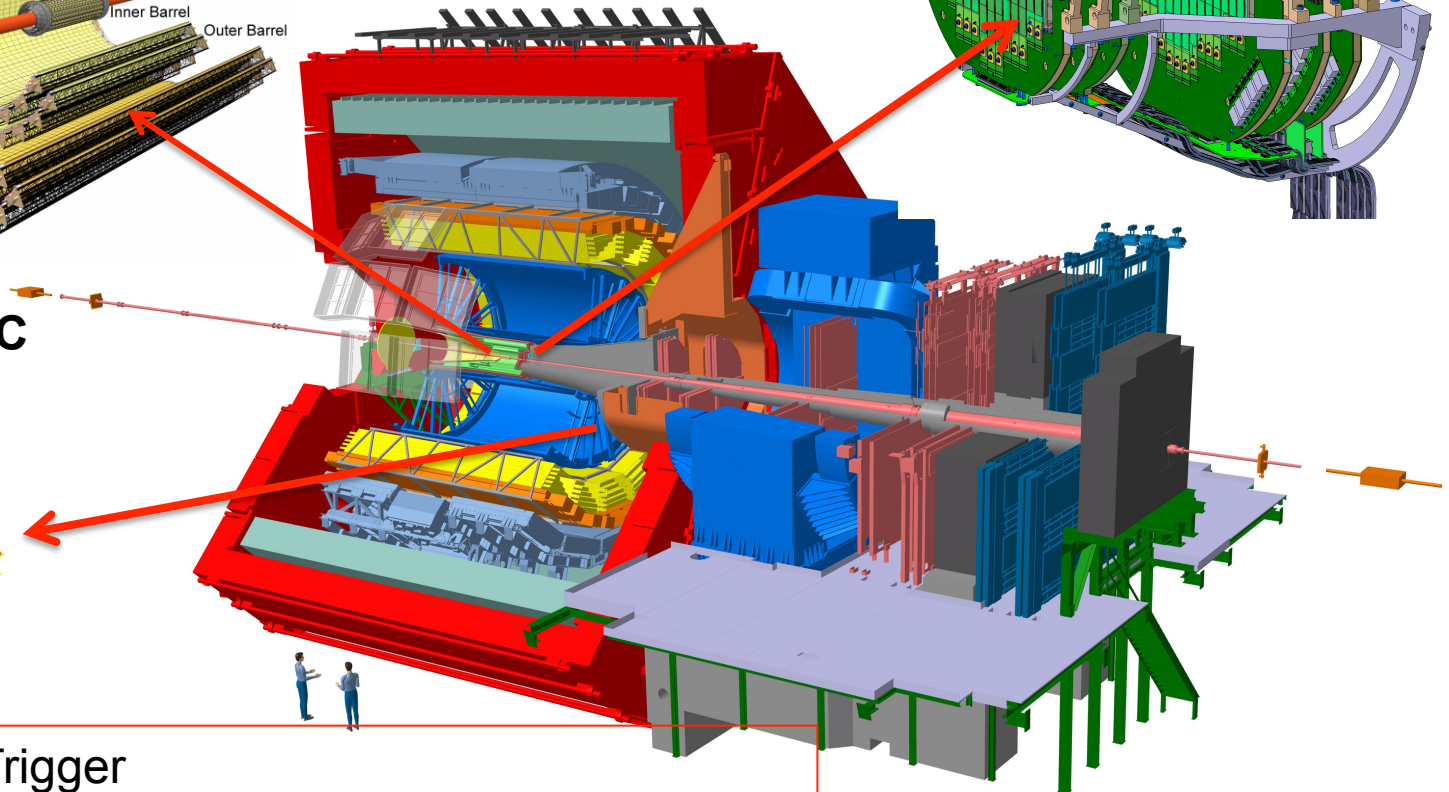
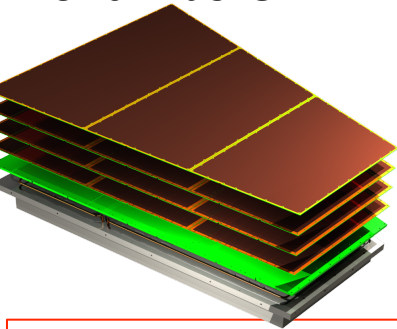
new ITS



Pixel muon forward tracker



GEM-based TPC chambers

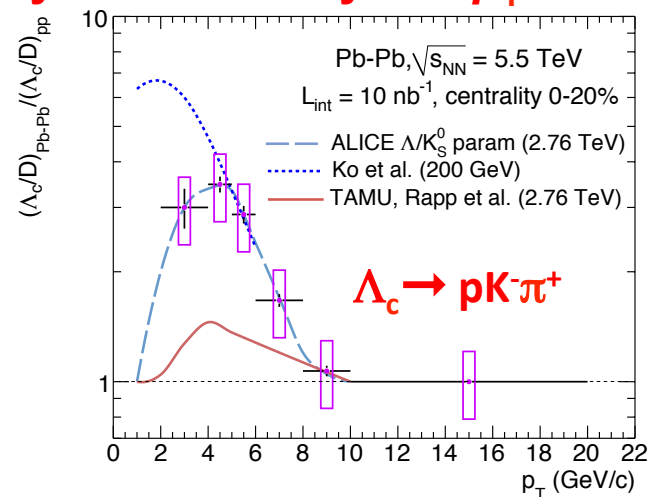
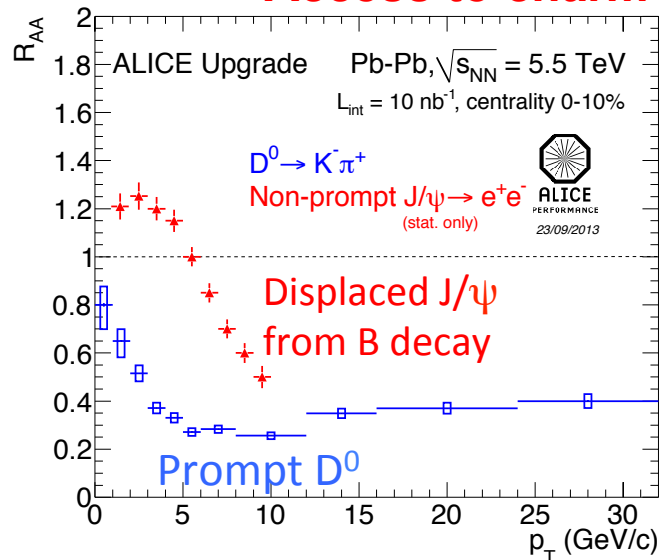


Fast Interaction Trigger  
New Online-Offline system  
Readout upgrade of other detectors  
**Goal: collect  $10 \text{ nb}^{-1}$  of min. bias Pb-Pb collisions**  
**x100 gain w.r.t. run 1+2 for min. bias**

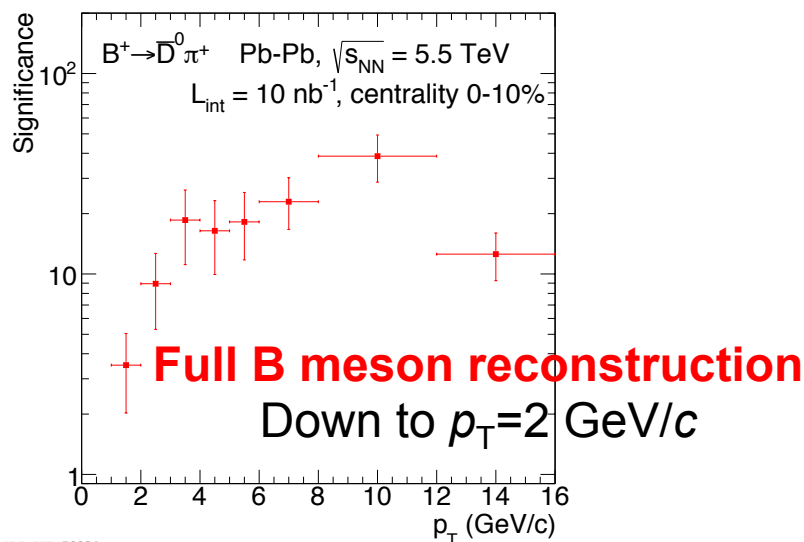
**All projects moving  
into production  
phase this year**

# Performance examples for HF signals

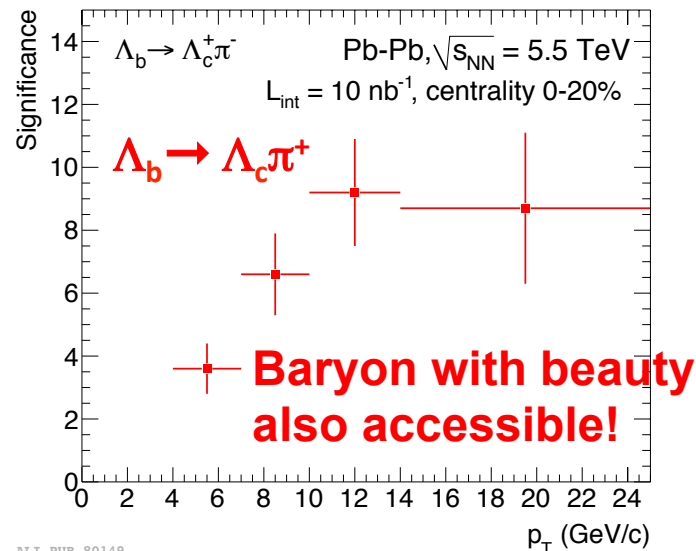
Access to charm and beauty down to very low  $p_T$



ALI-PUB-80329



ALI-PUB-79934



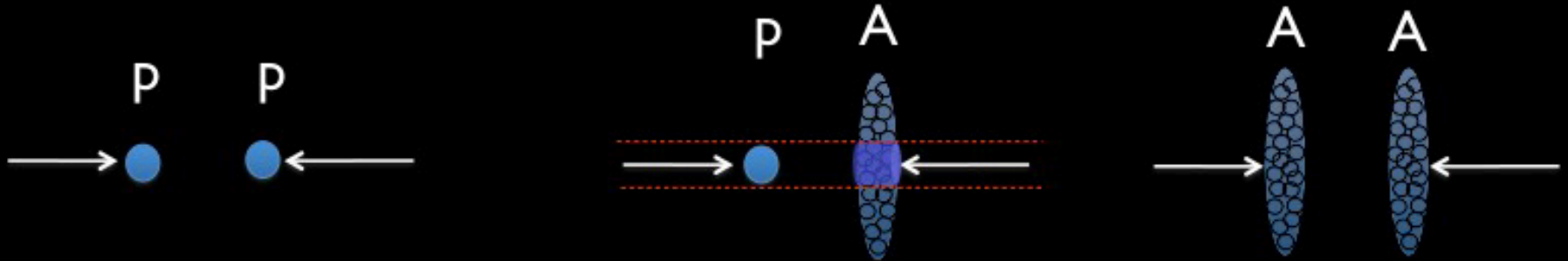
ALI-PUB-80149

# QGP in small systems?

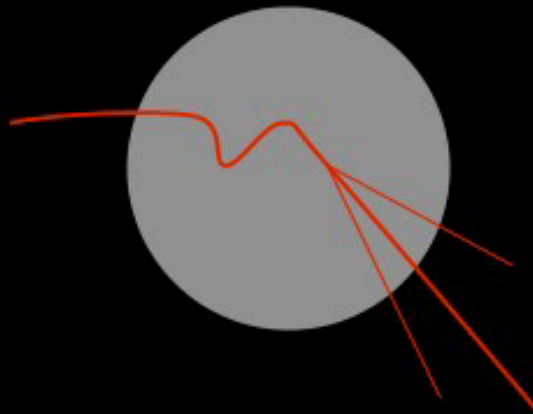


The future has  
already started!!

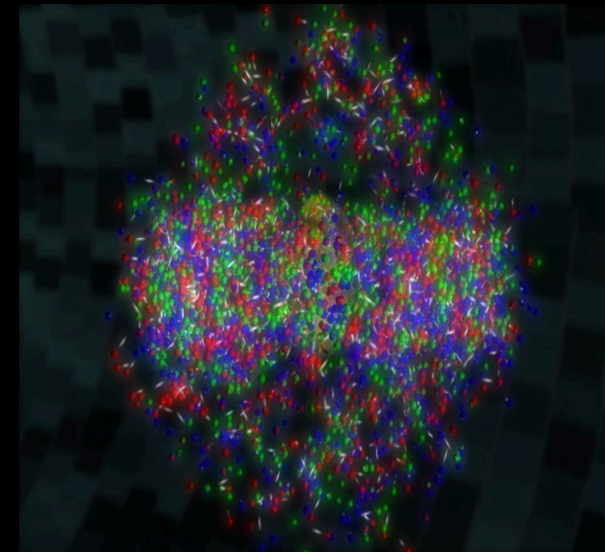
# The multi collision-system experimental approach: the initial design



Local structure of QCD  
vacuum



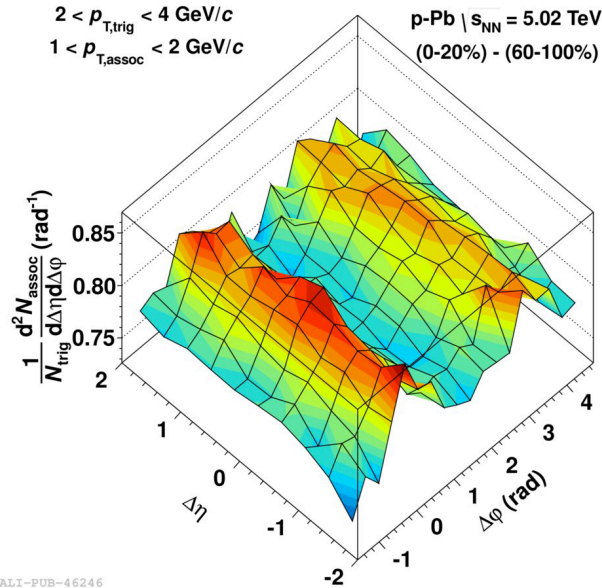
Local QCD  
+  
initial state/cold nuclear matter



Local QCD  
+  
initial state/cold nuclear matter  
+  
Quark-Gluon Plasma

# Long range correlations and flow in p-Pb

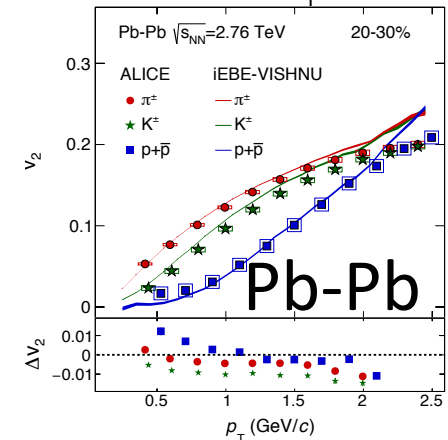
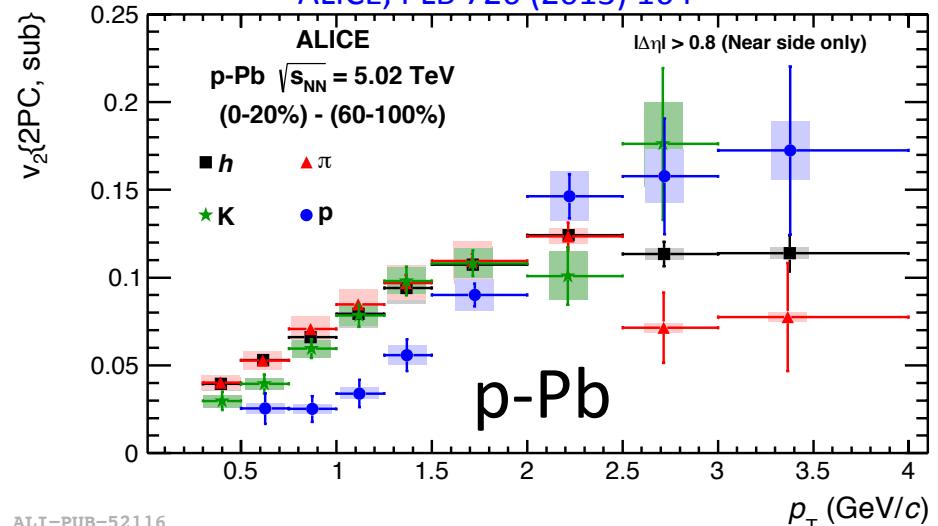
ALICE, PLB 719 (2013) 29



**Large  $v_2$  (elliptic flow) values!**

**Mass ordering and “crossing” similar to Pb-Pb,**  
where data are reproduced by hydrodynamical models

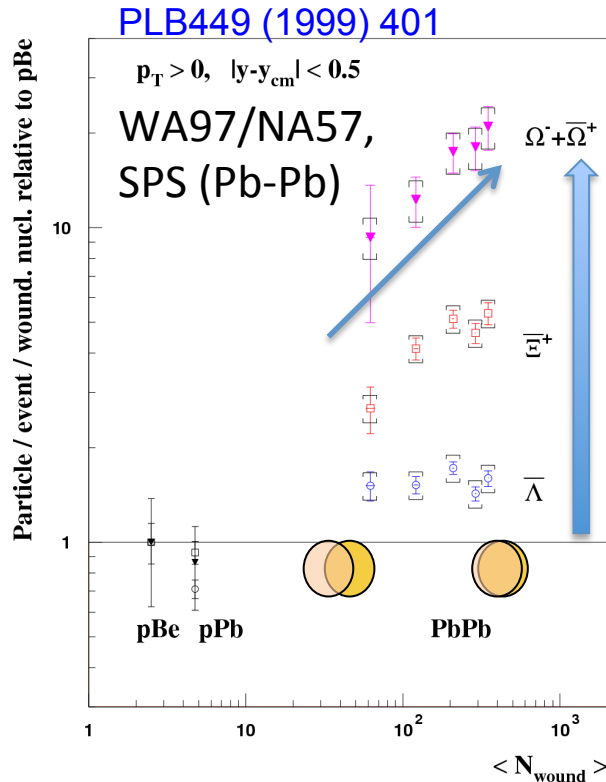
ALICE, PLB 726 (2013) 164



arxiv:1606.06057



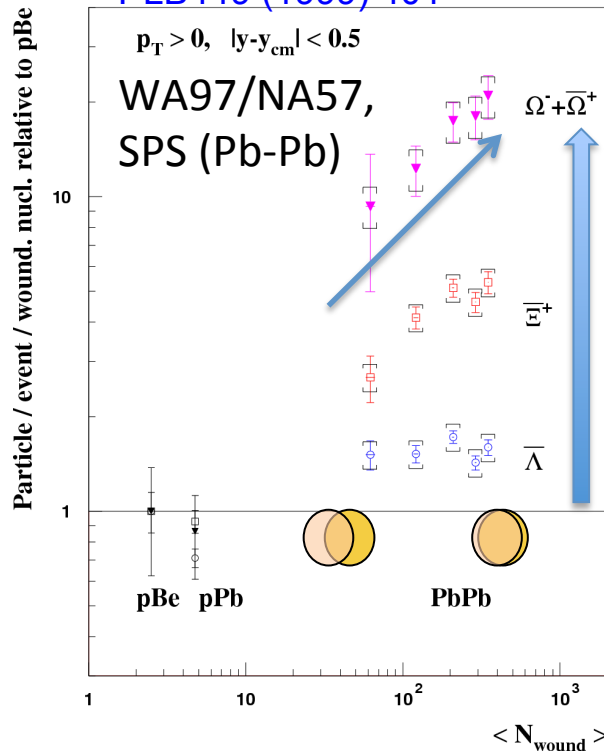
# Strangeness enhancement



- Increase of strange particle yield with collision centrality
- Stronger effect for particles with larger strangeness content
- Historical QGP “smoking gun” ([Rafelski, Müller, PRL48\(1982\)1066](#)), associated with partial chiral symmetry restoration (see backup) and removal of canonical suppression

# Strangene

PLB449 (1999) 401



## Strangeness enhancement at mid-rapidity in Pb–Pb collisions at 158 A GeV/c

WA97 Collaboration

E. Andersen <sup>b</sup>, F. Antinori <sup>ek</sup>, N. Armenise <sup>a</sup>, H. Bakke <sup>b</sup>, J. Bán <sup>g</sup>, D. Barberis <sup>f</sup>,  
H. Beker <sup>e</sup>, W. Beusch <sup>e</sup>, I.J. Bloodworth <sup>d</sup>, J. Böhm <sup>m</sup>, R. Caliendo <sup>a</sup>,  
M. Campbell <sup>e</sup>, E. Cantatore <sup>e</sup>, N. Carrer <sup>k</sup>, M.G. Catanesi <sup>a</sup>, E. Chesi <sup>e</sup>,  
M. Dameri <sup>f</sup>, G. Darbo <sup>f</sup>, A. Diaczek <sup>l</sup>, D. Di Bari <sup>a</sup>, S. Di Liberto <sup>n</sup>, B.C. Earl <sup>d</sup>,  
D. Elia <sup>a</sup>, D. Evans <sup>d</sup>, K. Fanebust <sup>b</sup>, R.A. Fani <sup>a</sup>, J.C. Fontaine <sup>i</sup>, J. Ftáčnik <sup>g</sup>,  
B. Ghidini <sup>a</sup>, G. Grella <sup>o</sup>, M. Guida <sup>o</sup>, E.H.M. Heijne <sup>e</sup>, H. Helstrup <sup>c</sup>, A.K. Holme <sup>j</sup>,  
D. Huss <sup>i</sup>, A. Jacholkowski <sup>a</sup>, G.T. Jones <sup>d</sup>, P. Jovanovic <sup>d</sup>, A. Jusko <sup>g</sup>,  
T. Kachelhoffer <sup>p</sup>, J.B. Kinson <sup>d</sup>, A. Kirk <sup>d</sup>, W. Klempt <sup>e</sup>, B.T.H. Knudsen <sup>b</sup>,  
K. Knudson <sup>e</sup>, I. Králik <sup>e</sup>, V. Lenti <sup>a</sup>, R. Lietava <sup>g</sup>, R.A. Loconsole <sup>a</sup>,  
G. Løvhøiden <sup>j</sup>, M. Lupták <sup>g</sup>, V. Mack <sup>i</sup>, V. Manzari <sup>a</sup>, P. Martinengo <sup>e</sup>,  
M.A. Mazzoni <sup>n</sup>, F. Meddi <sup>n</sup>, A. Michalon <sup>p</sup>, M.E. Michalon-Mentzer <sup>p</sup>,  
P. Middelkamp <sup>e</sup>, M. Morando <sup>k</sup>, M.T. Muciaccia <sup>a</sup>, E. Nappi <sup>a</sup>, F. Navach <sup>a</sup>,  
P.I. Norman <sup>d</sup>, B. Osculati <sup>f</sup>, B. Pastirčák <sup>g</sup>, F. Pellegrini <sup>k</sup>, K. Piška <sup>m</sup>,  
F. Posa <sup>a</sup>, E. Quercigh <sup>e</sup>, **R.A. Ricci** <sup>h</sup>, G. Romano <sup>o</sup>, G. Rosa <sup>n</sup>, L. Rossi <sup>f</sup>,  
H. Rotschmidt <sup>e</sup>, K. Šafarik <sup>e</sup>, S. Saladino <sup>a</sup>, C. Salvo <sup>f</sup>, L. Šándor <sup>eg</sup>,  
G. Segato <sup>k</sup>, M. Sené <sup>l</sup>, R. Sené <sup>l</sup>, S. Simone <sup>a</sup>, W. Snoeys <sup>e</sup>, P. Staroba <sup>m</sup>,  
S. Szafran <sup>i</sup>, M. Thompson <sup>d</sup>, T.F. Thorsteinsen <sup>b</sup>, G. Tomasichio <sup>a</sup>, G.D. Torrieri <sup>d</sup>,  
T.S. Tveter <sup>j</sup>, J. Urbán <sup>g</sup>, M. Venables <sup>d</sup>, O. Villalobos Baillie <sup>d</sup>, T. Virgili <sup>o</sup>,  
A. Volte <sup>l</sup>, M.F. Votruba <sup>d</sup>, P. Závada <sup>m</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Dipartimento I.A. di Fisica dell'Università e del Politecnico di Bari and Sezione INFN, Bari, Italy

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<sup>d</sup> School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

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<sup>f</sup> Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università and Sezione INFN, Genoa, Italy

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<sup>h</sup> INFN, Laboratori Nazionali di Legnaro, Legnaro, Italy

<sup>i</sup> GRPHE, Université de Haute Alsace, Mulhouse, France

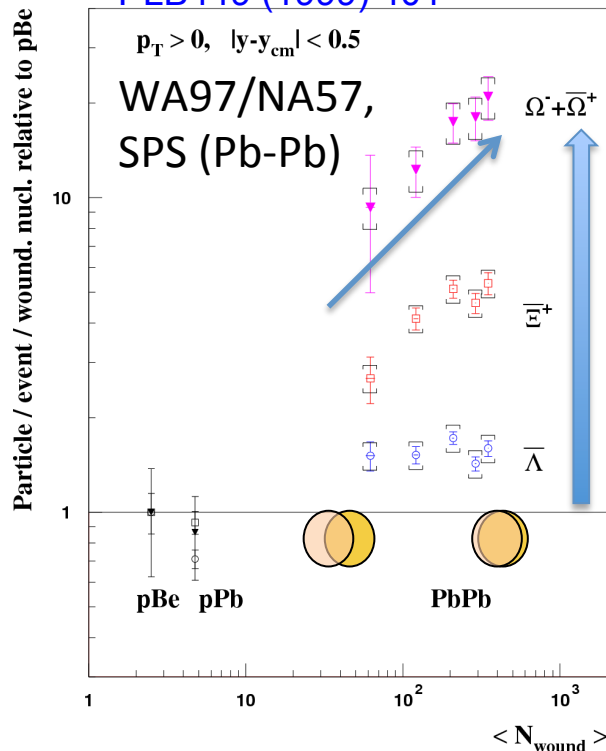
<sup>j</sup> Fysisk institutt, Universitetet i Oslo, Oslo, Norway

<sup>k</sup> Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università and Sezione INFN, Padua, Italy

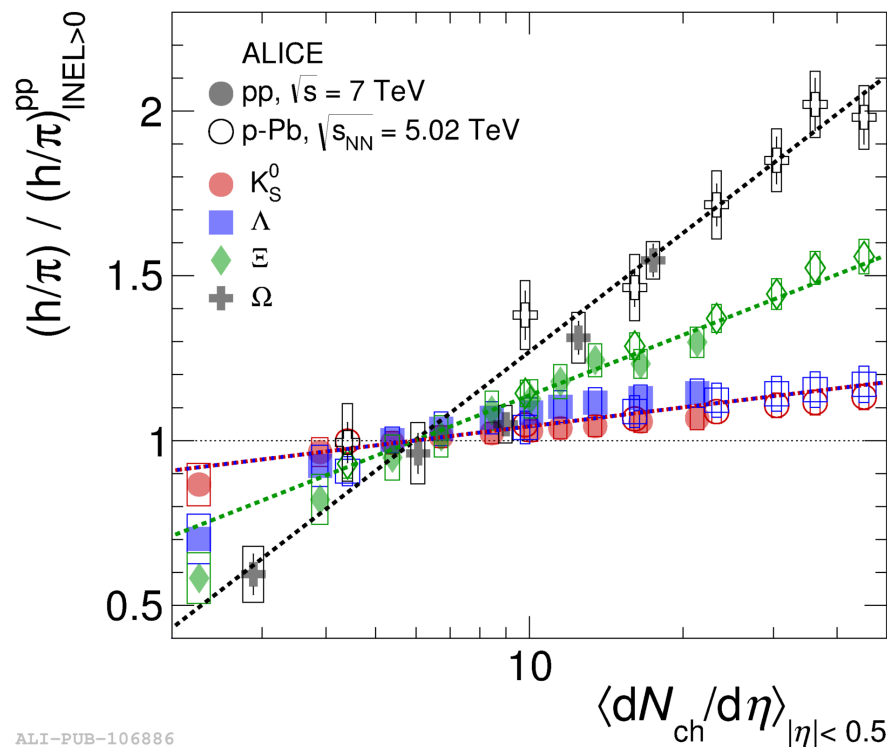
- Increase of strange particle yield
- Stronger effect for particles with large mass
- Historical QGP “smoking gun” (Rattner) chiral symmetry restoration (see below)

# Strangeness enhancement

PLB449 (1999) 401



Nature Physics (2017) doi:10.1038/nphys4111



ALI-PUB-106886

- Increase of strange particle yield with collision centrality
- Stronger effect for particles with larger strangeness content
- Historical QGP “smoking gun” ([Rafelski, Müller, PRL48\(1982\)1066](#)), associated with partial chiral symmetry restoration (see backup) and removal of canonical suppression

Now observed also in pp collisions at high multiplicity

→ New research direction

# Summary

... only a snapshot of the main results presented

After 30 years of studies QGP formation in heavy-ion collisions quite established

The experimental goal is now to measure precisely its properties and achieve a comprehensive microscopic description of the medium

- Event-by-event studies and fluctuations
- Push precision for particle chemistry (baryon/mesons, resonances,...)
- Hard-probes: still much room for improving precision and for more differential measurements → still a lot to learn!

Recent years: indication of collective QGP-like effects in small collision systems with particle multiplicity a possible “collant”/common scale

→ Really QGP in pp/p-A collisions?

→ Possibility to study onset of these phenomena?

→ New research direction

**A lot of work for ongoing and future/upgraded experiments!**

# SPARES

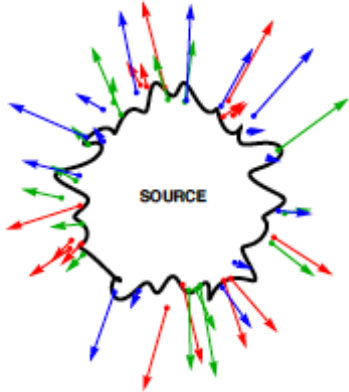


# System size: HBT interferometry

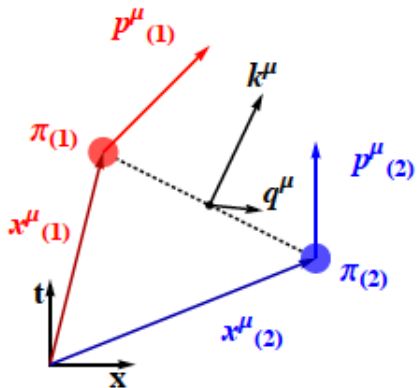
## Hanbury-Brown and Twiss

“Bose-Einstein” enhancement in the momentum correlation of identical bosons emitted close in phase  $\longrightarrow$  Probe “homogeneity emission region” and decoupling time

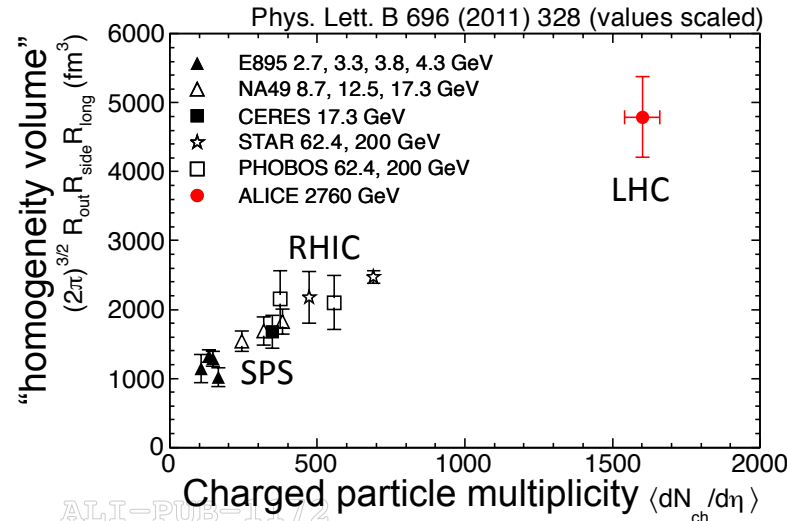
source emitting particles



two identical pions,  $\pi^+\pi^+$ ,  $\pi^-\pi^-$



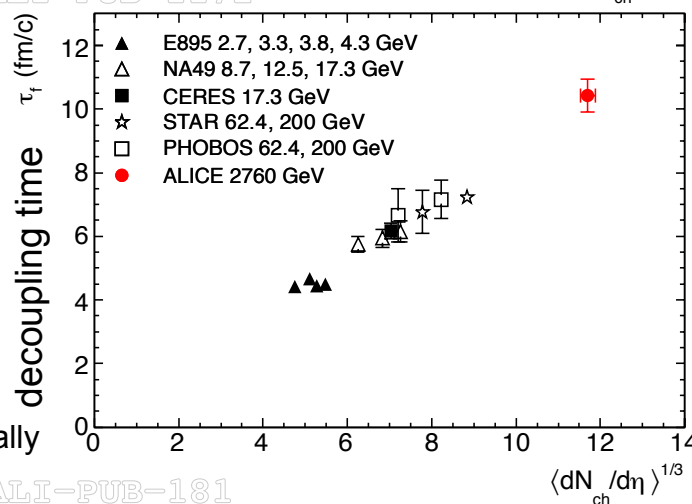
From  $R_{\text{long}}$ , assuming longitudinally expanding emission source



$$R_{\text{out}} \sim R_{\text{side}} \sim 6 \text{ fm}$$

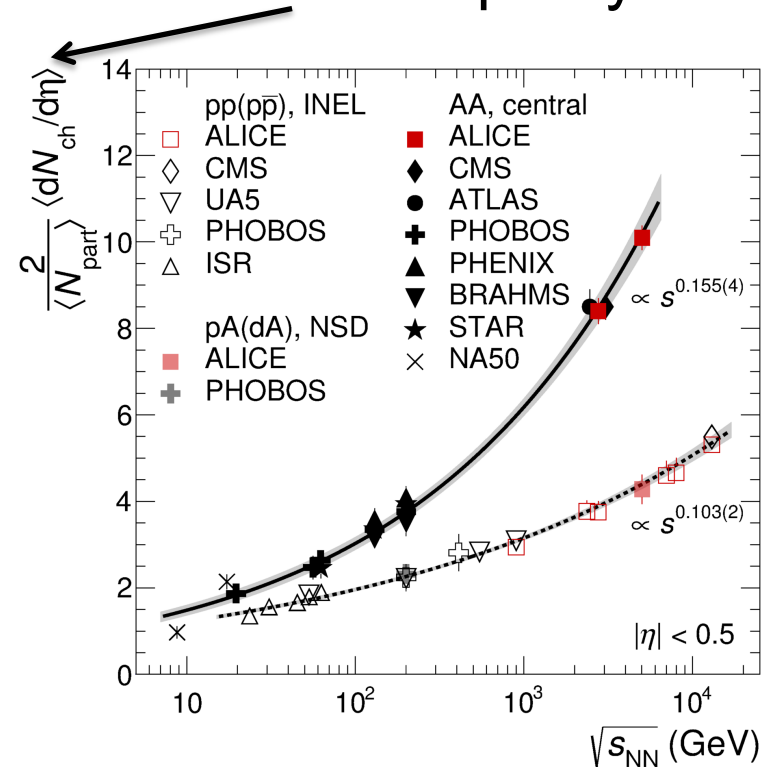
$$R_{\text{long}} \sim 8 \text{ fm}$$

As expected, larger-size and longer living system produced at the LHC



# Energy density

- Particle multiplicity at mid-rapidity  $\rightarrow$  transverse energy density



Bjorken formula:

$$\varepsilon = \frac{E}{V} = \frac{1}{Sc\tau_0} \left. \frac{dE_T}{dy} \right|_{y=0}$$

$S$  = transverse dimension of nucleus

$\tau_0$  = "formation time"  $\sim 1$  fm/c

	SPS	RHIC	LHC
$\left. \frac{dE_T}{dy} \right _{y=0} \text{ (GeV) } *$	400	800	2000

$\varepsilon \text{ (GeV/fm}^3 \text{) } *$	2.5	5	12
---	-----	---	----

\*Indicative numbers

ALI-PUB-104920

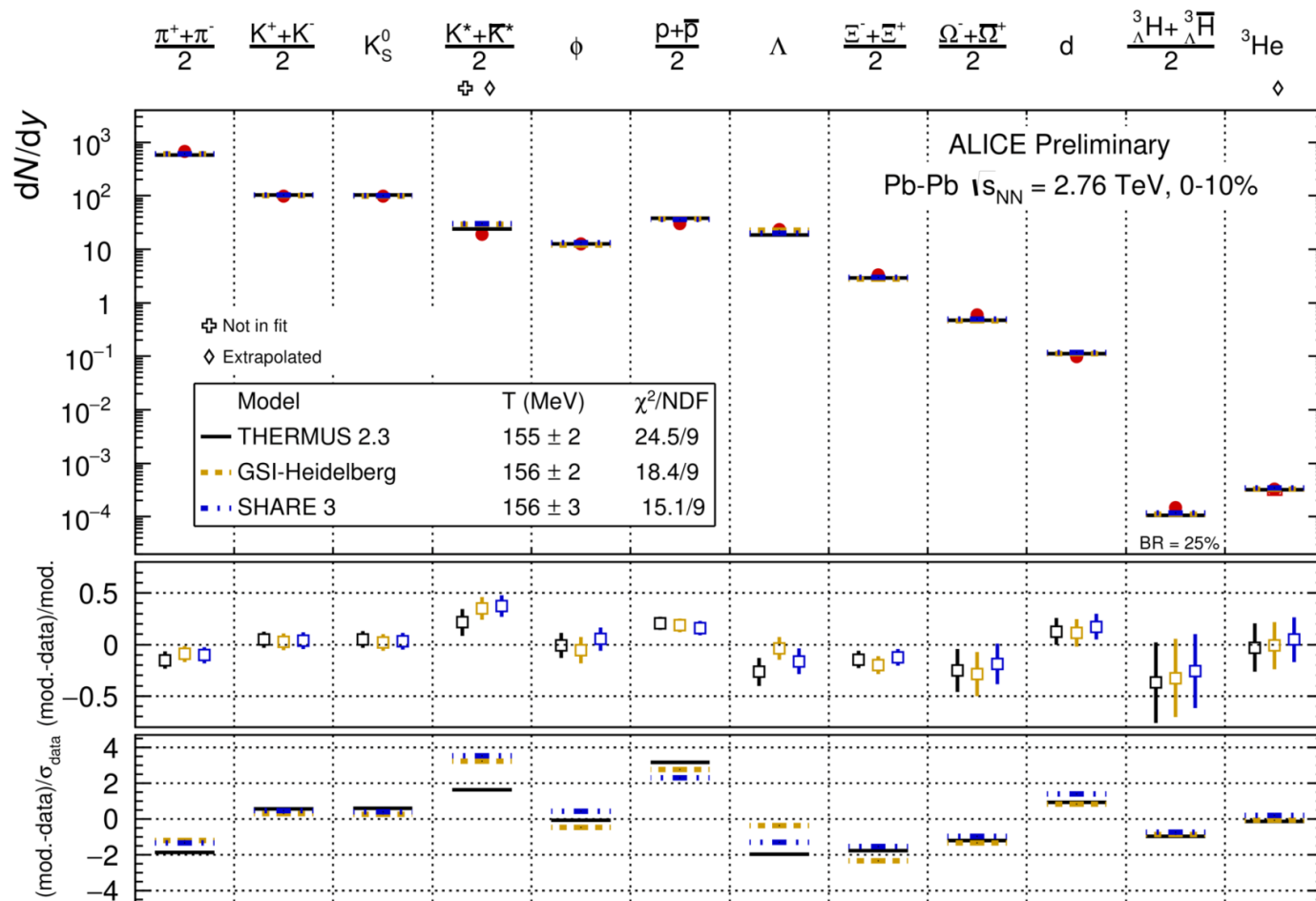
[Phys. Rev. Lett. 116 \(2016\) 222302](#)

More than enough for deconfinement!

$$\varepsilon_c \sim 0.6 \text{ GeV/fm}^3$$

# Thermal model and chemical freeze-out temperature

Chemical freeze-out temperature estimated from **relative particle abundances**  
 Model assuming statistical hadronization: particle abundances determined by their mass and quantum numbers (spin) at by system properties ( $T_{\text{ch}}, u_B, \dots$ )

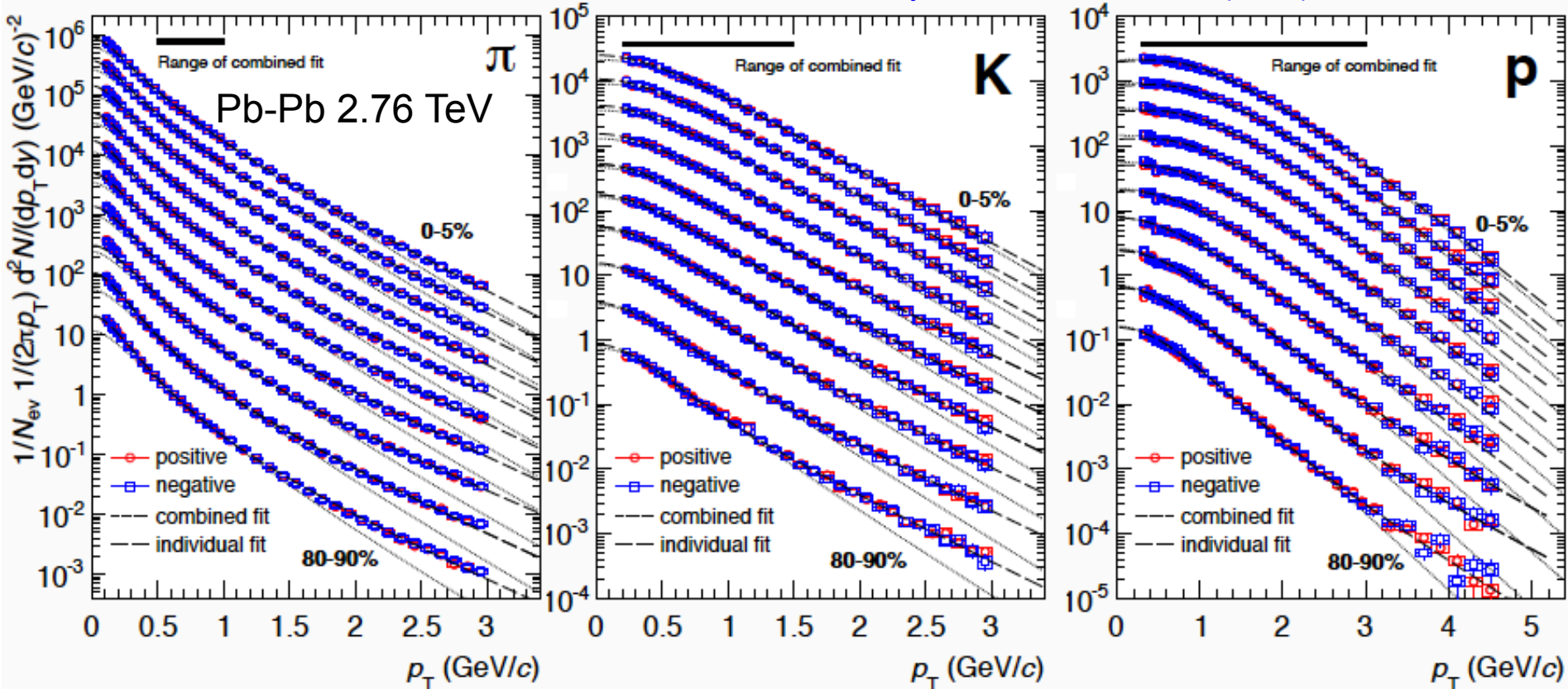


Hadron yields described assuming chemical equilibrium and  $T_{\text{ch}} \sim 156$  MeV  $\rightarrow$  close to lattice QCD expectation for  $T_{\text{crit}}$

Some tension for protons and  $K^*$

# Kinetic freeze-out temperature

Phys. Rev. C 88, 044910 (2013)

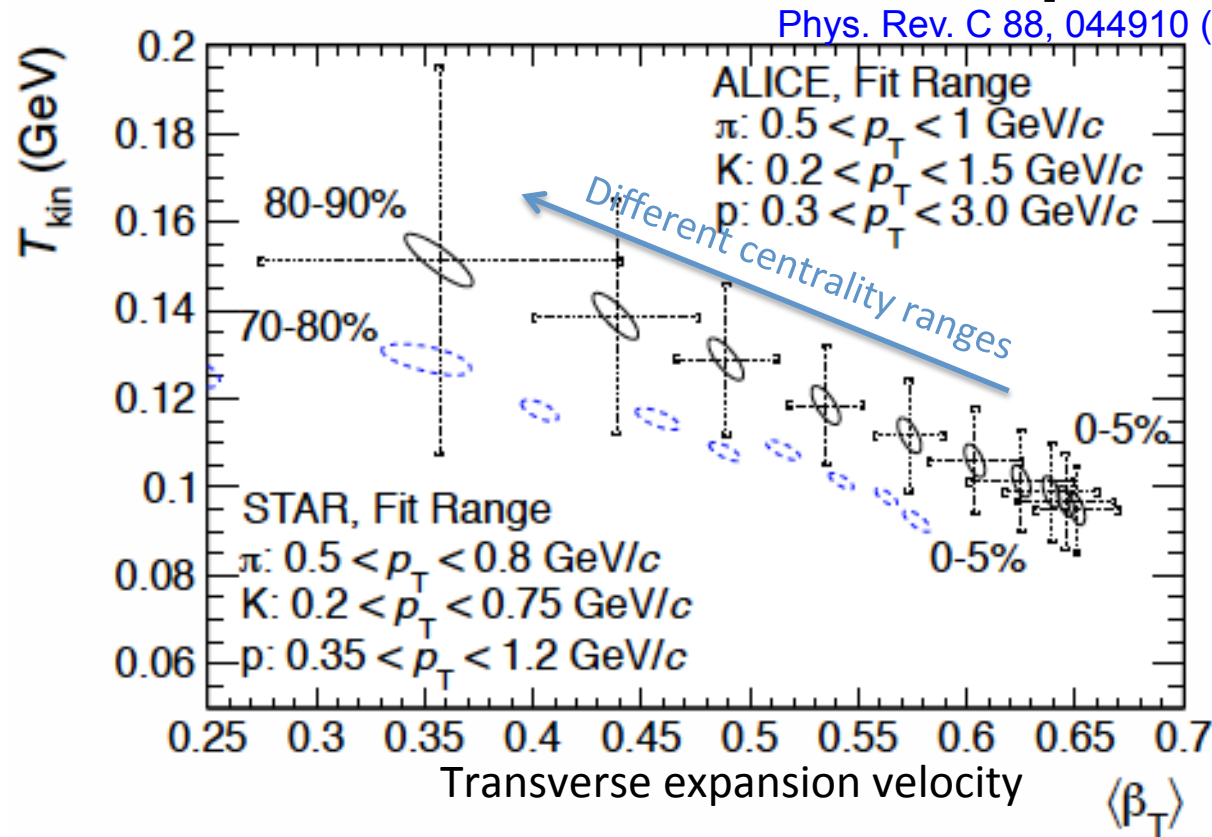


**Combined fit to several particle spectra  $\rightarrow$  system properties at kinetic freeze-out**

**“Blast-wave” model:** thermalized volume elements expanding in a common velocity field ( $\rightarrow$  convolution of thermal velocity with expansion velocity)

- Goodness of the global fit  $\rightarrow$  hydro-dynamical description holds

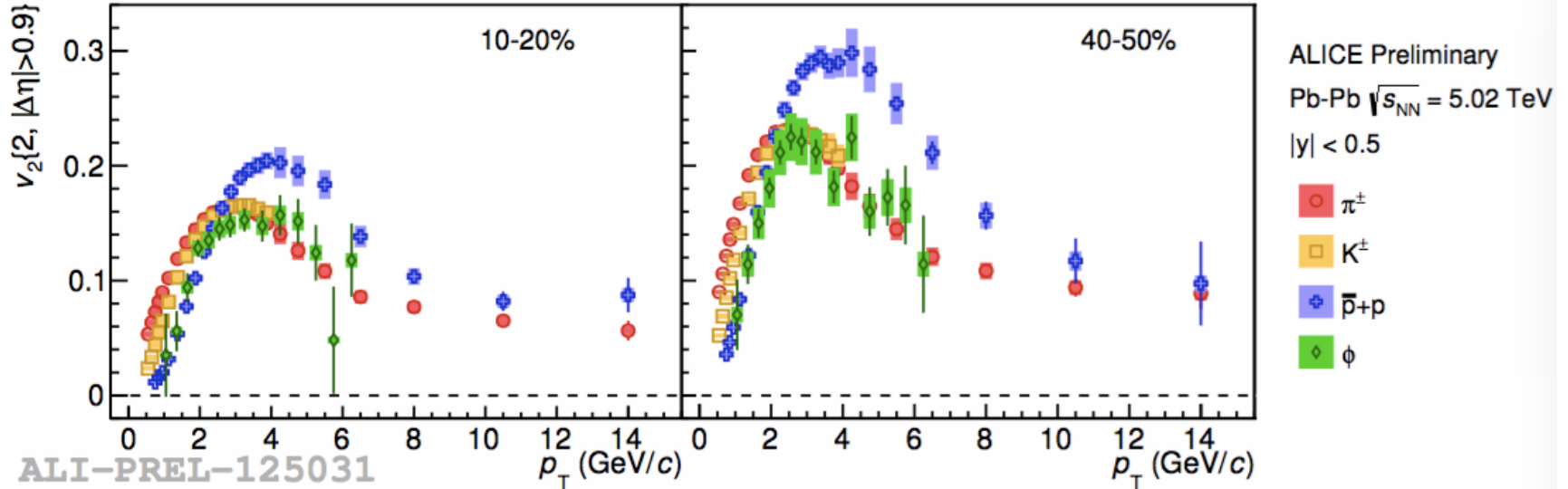
# Kinetic freeze-out temperature



**Combined fit to several particle spectra  $\rightarrow$  system properties at kinetic freeze-out**  
**“Blast-wave” model:** thermalized volume elements expanding in a common velocity field ( $\rightarrow$  convolution of thermal velocity with expansion velocity)

- Goodness of the global fit  $\rightarrow$  hydro-dynamical description holds
- In central collisions at LHC:  $T_{\text{kin}} \sim 90$  MeV, transverse expansion velocity  $\sim 0.65 c$

# Elliptic flow at 5 TeV



## $\phi$ flow vs. $p_T$ :

- Mass ordering at low  $p_T$
- Baryon vs. meson grouping at higher  $p_T$  (2-6 GeV/c)

Quark-level flow + recombination?

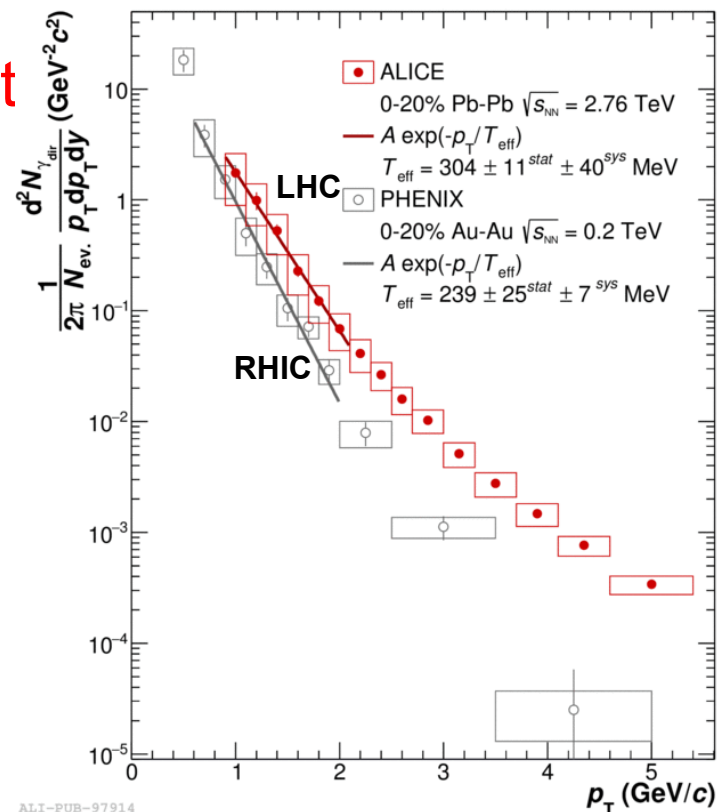
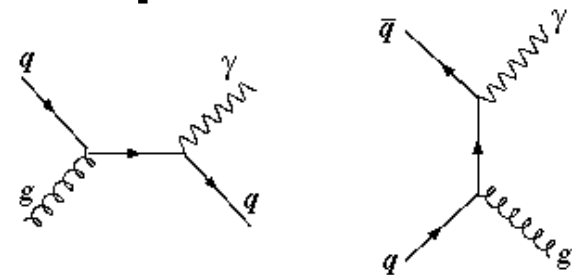


# Temperature from Photon spectrum

- Photons in heavy-ion collisions
  - Photons from QCD hard scattering: power law spectrum – dominant at high  $p_T$
  - Thermal photons, emitted by the hot system (analogy with black body radiation): exponential spectrum – dominant at low  $p_T$ 
    - From inverse slope:

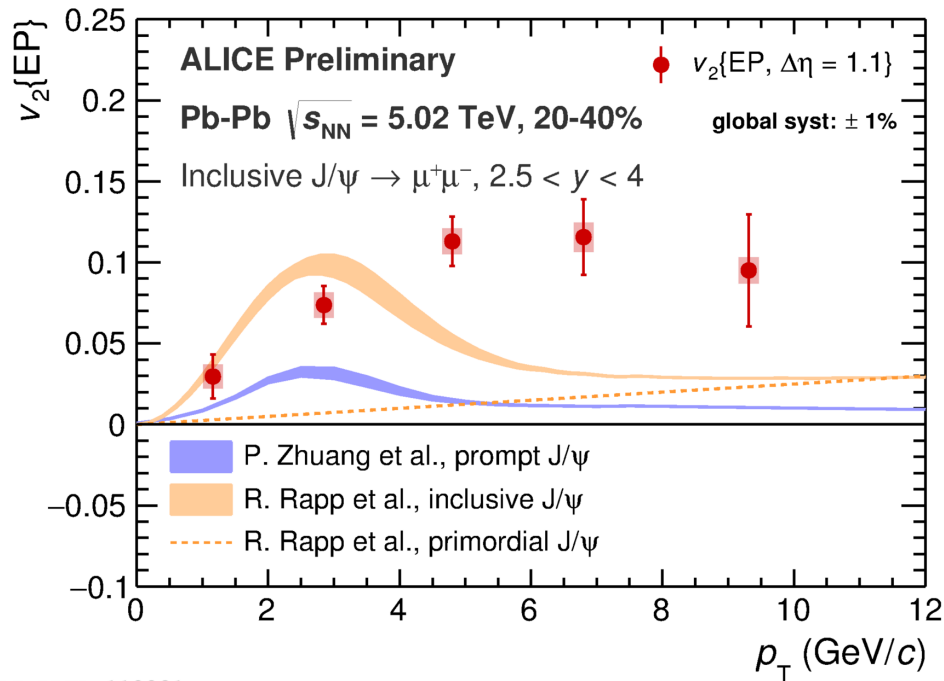
$$\begin{aligned}
 T_{\text{eff}}^* &= 304 \pm 41 \text{ MeV} \\
 &\sim 2 T_c \quad (T_c \sim 160 \text{ MeV}) \\
 &\sim 1.25 \times T_{\text{eff}}(\text{RHIC})
 \end{aligned}$$

\* “Average” over whole medium evolution

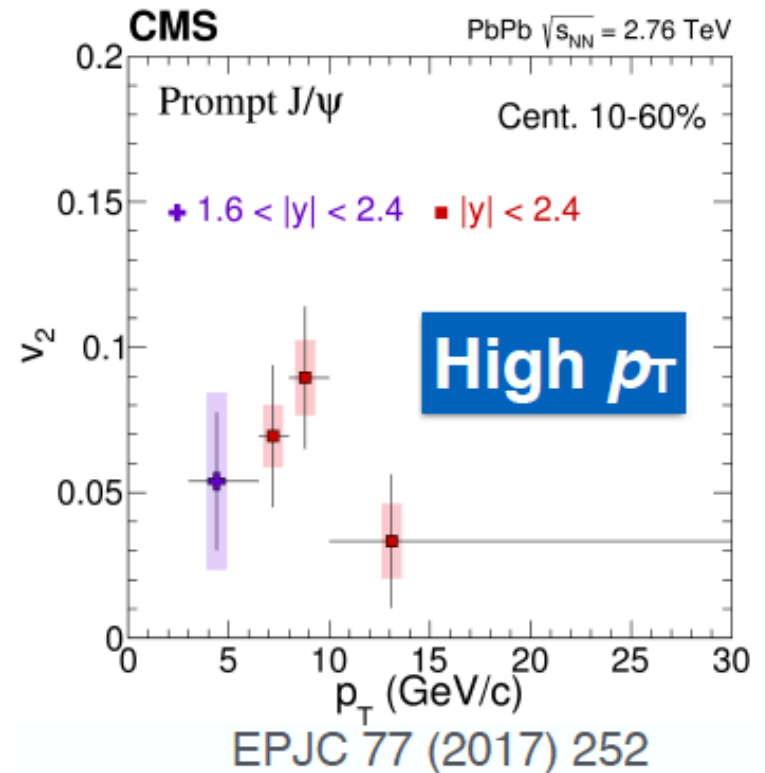


ALI-PUB-97914

# J/ψ elliptic flow



ALI-PREL-118891



Positive J/ψ elliptic flow  
 Expected for J/ψ from recombination  
 Remains high at high  $p_T$  → not expected from models

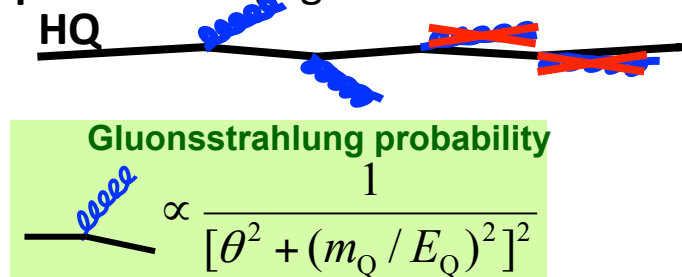
# QGP tomography with heavy quarks

- Early production in hard-scattering processes with high  $Q^2$  ← at all  $p_T$  for charm and beauty (large masses  $\gg \Lambda_{\text{QCD}}$ )
  - Production cross sections calculable with pQCD
  - Strongly interacting with the medium
  - Hard fragmentation → measured meson properties closer to parton ones
- ⇒ **“Calibrated probes” of the medium**

Study parton interaction with the medium

- **energy loss via radiative** (“gluon Bremsstrahlung”) **collisional processes**

- path length and medium density
- **color charge** (Casimir factor)
- **quark mass** (e.g. from dead-cone effect)



Dokshitzer, Khoze, Troyan, JPG 17 (1991) 1602.  
Dokshitzer and Kharzeev, PLB 519 (2001) 199.

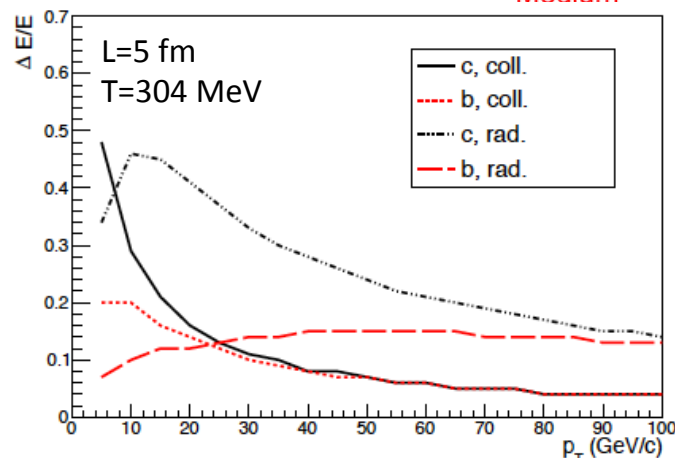
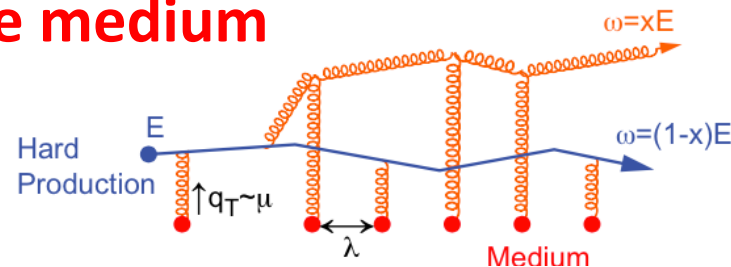


Figure from A. Andronic *et al.*, EPJC C76 (2016)  
M. Djordjevic, Phys. Rev. C80 064909 (2009), Phys.  
Rev. C74 064907 (2006).

# QGP tomography with heavy quarks

- Early production in hard-scattering processes with high  $Q^2$  ← at all  $p_T$  for charm and beauty (large masses  $\gg \Lambda_{\text{QCD}}$ )
- Production cross sections calculable with pQCD
- Strongly interacting with the medium
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**“Calibrated probes” of the medium**

Study parton interaction with the medium

- **energy loss via radiative** (“gluon Bremsstrahlung”)

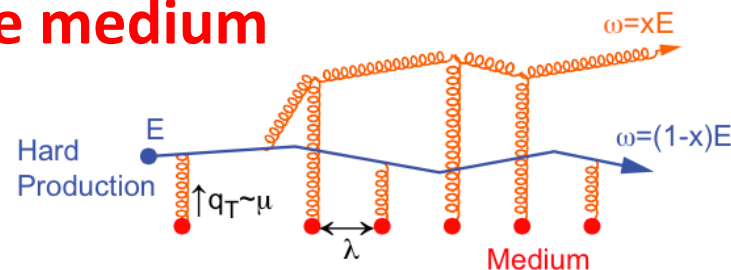
**collisional processes**

- path length and medium density
- **color charge** (Casimir factor)
- **quark mass** (e.g. from dead-cone effect)

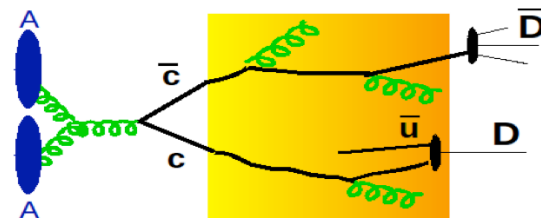
- medium **modification to HF hadron formation**

- hadronization via quark coalescence

- participation in collective motion → azimuthal anisotropy of produced particle



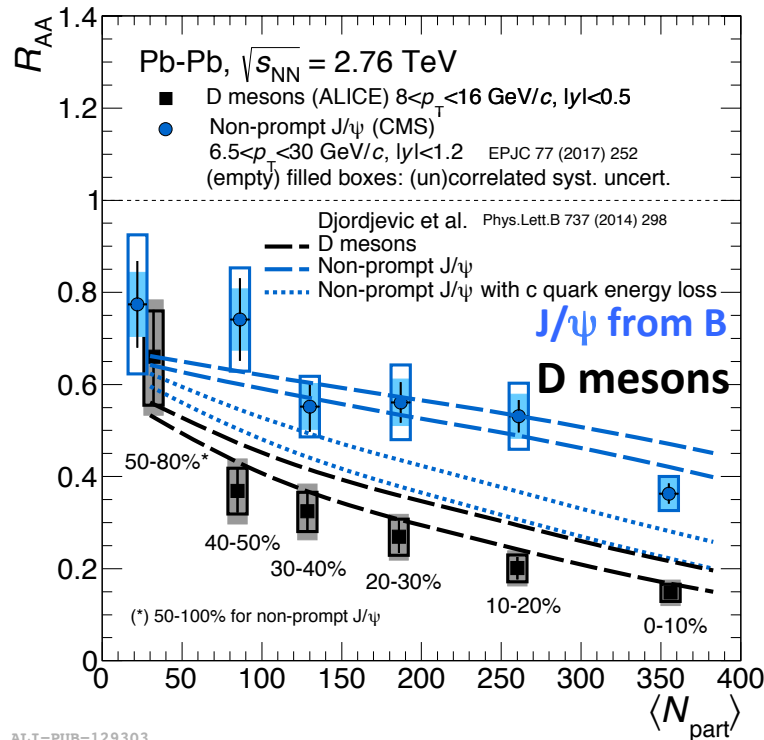
$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{radiative} \\ \text{collisional} \end{array} \right\} \Delta E_g > \Delta E_{u,d,s} > \Delta E_c > \Delta E_b$$



# Open charm and beauty

ALICE, JHEP 1511 (2015) 205

CMS, EPJ C 77 (2017) 252

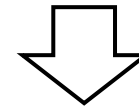


ALI-PUB-129303

Similar D meson and pion  $R_{AA}$

Expected from small charm-quark mass  
+ differences between charm and  
gluon/LF spectra slope and  
fragmentation

$R_{AA}(J/\psi \text{ from B}) > R_{AA}(D)$  in central collisions

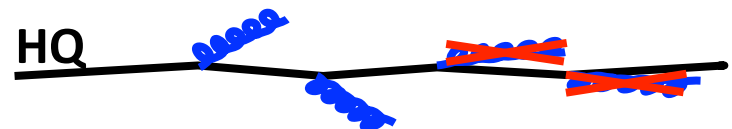


Indication of  $R_{AA}(B) > R_{AA}(D)$

The different suppression and the centrality  
dependence as expected from **models with**  
**quark-mass dependent energy loss**

$$(\Delta E_g > \Delta E_{lq} \geq \Delta E_c > \Delta E_b)$$

Expected from dead cone effect:



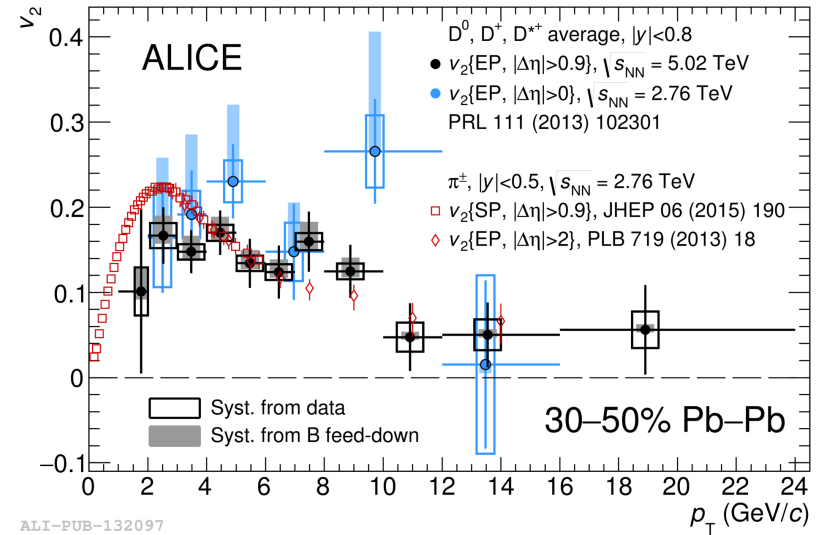
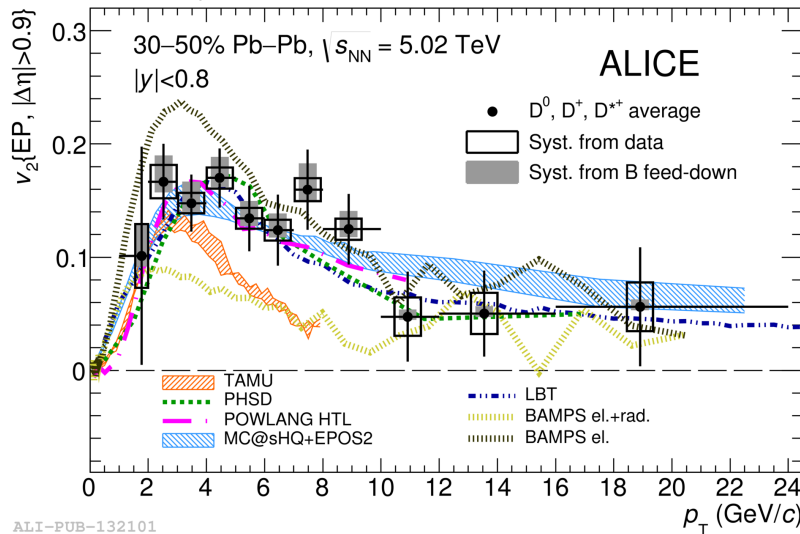
**Gluonsstrahlung probability**

$$\propto \frac{1}{[\theta^2 + (m_Q / E_Q)^2]^2}$$

Dokshitzer, Khoze, Troyan, JPG 17 (1991) 1602.  
Dokshitzer and Kharzeev, PLB 519 (2001) 199.

# Open charm and beauty

Today on arxiv: [arXiv:1707.01005](https://arxiv.org/abs/1707.01005)



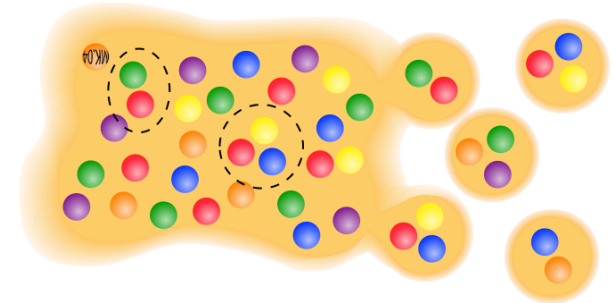
**Charm flows → important constraints to models**

**$D_s$  vs. non strange  $D$ :** modification of particle species abundances?

→ hadronisation via coalescence?

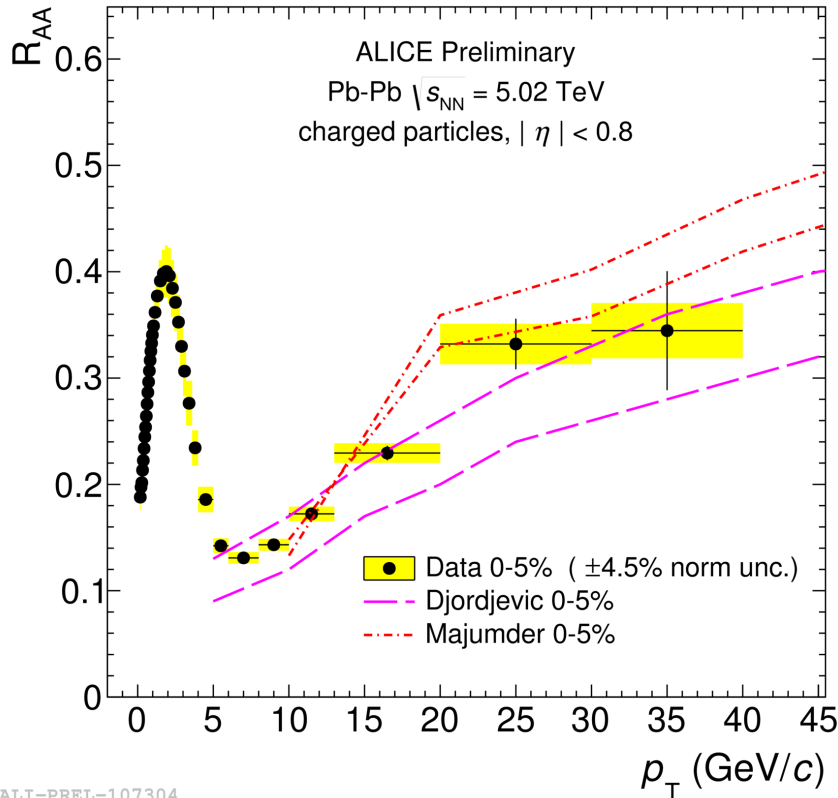
→ Charm participates to system collective motion

→ Possible thermalisation? Need more precision at low  $p_T$





# QGP tomography with high-energy partons



ALI-PREL-107304

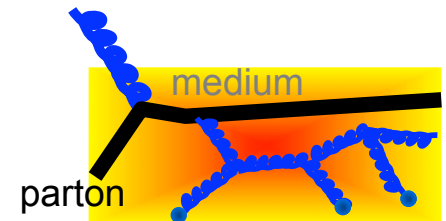
**Very similar result at 5 TeV (run-2)**

Strong suppression of intermediate/  
high  $p_T$  particles in central Pb-Pb  
collisions

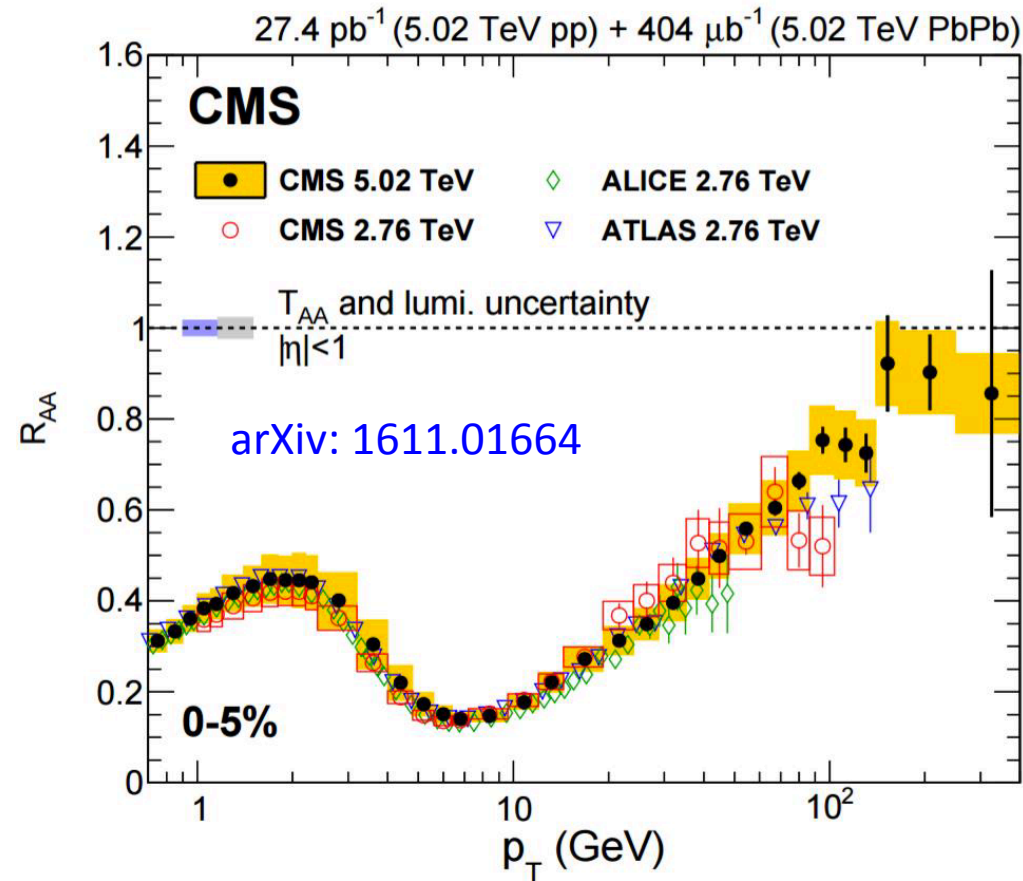
Absent in p-Pb collisions (no QGP  
expected)

→ final-state effect

→ Evidence of in-medium partonic  
energy loss



# QGP tomography with high-energy partons



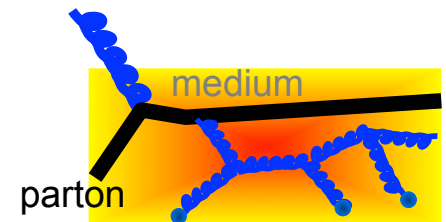
Suppression up to very high  $p_T$

Strong suppression of intermediate/high  $p_T$  particles in central Pb-Pb collisions

Absent in p-Pb collisions (no QGP expected)

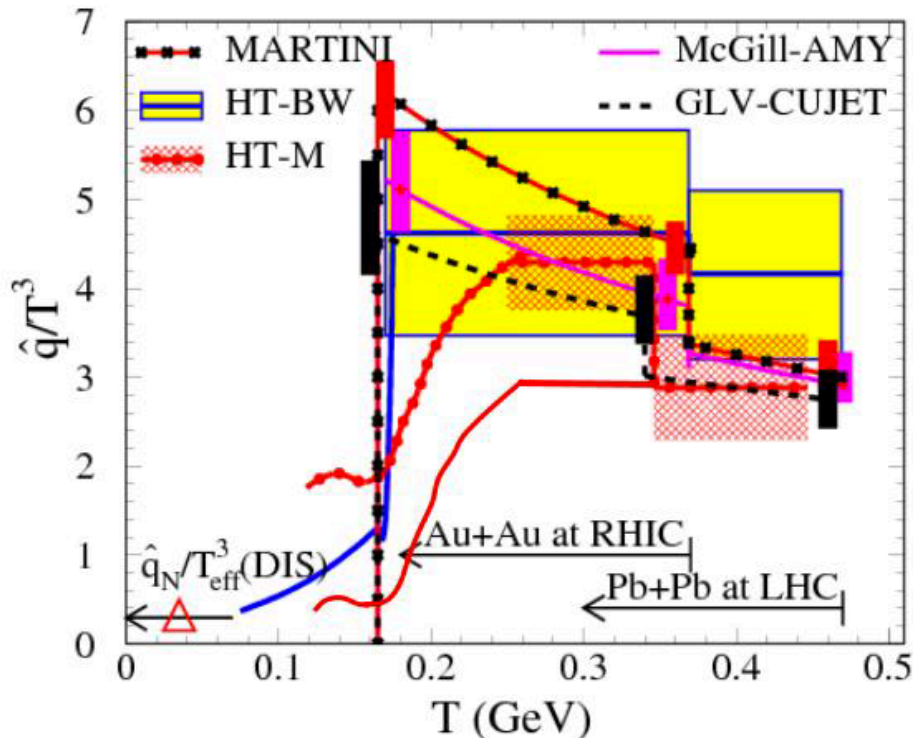
→ final-state effect

→ Evidence of in-medium partonic energy loss

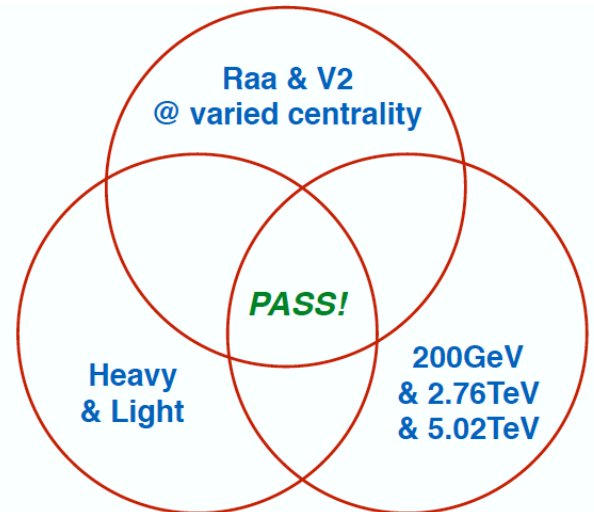


# Started to extract information from data

From analysis of inclusive charged particle spectra at RHIC and LHC and considering many models



Only a starting point!



from J. Liao, QM2017

[Nucl.Phys. A931 \(2014\) 404-409](#)

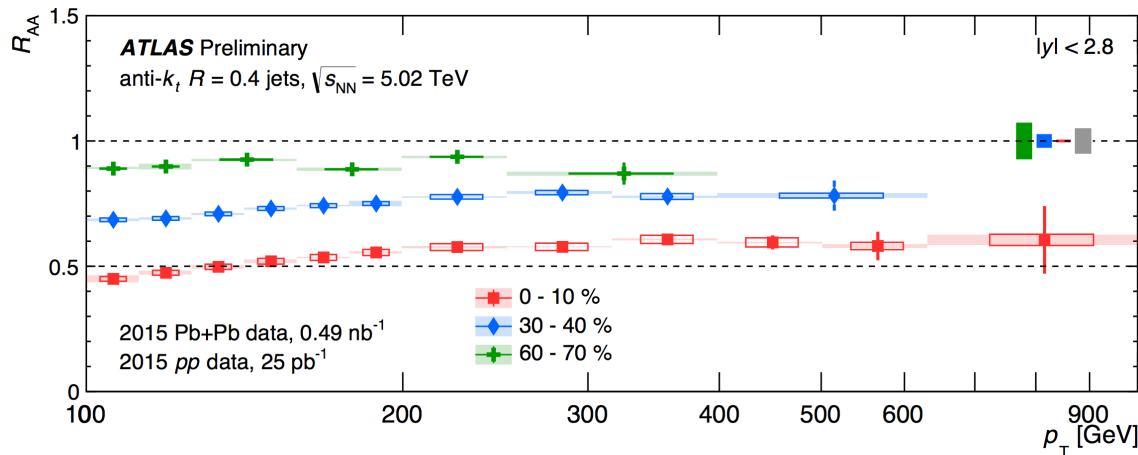
$$\hat{q} = 1.2 \pm 0.3 \text{ GeV}^2/\text{fm} \text{ (central Au-Au } \sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200 \text{ GeV)}$$

$$\hat{q} = 1.9 \pm 0.7 \text{ GeV}^2/\text{fm} \text{ (central Pb-Pb } \sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76 \text{ TeV)}$$

# Jet quenching

Jets are “extended” objects → provide complementary information to single particle observables

- Address spatial distribution and kinetic properties of radiated energy
- **Out-of-cone radiation → jet suppression**



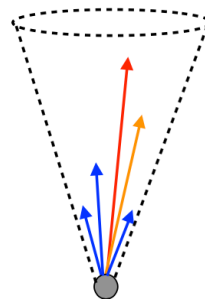
Jet suppression  
up to ~1 TeV!

Is the jet internal structure modified?

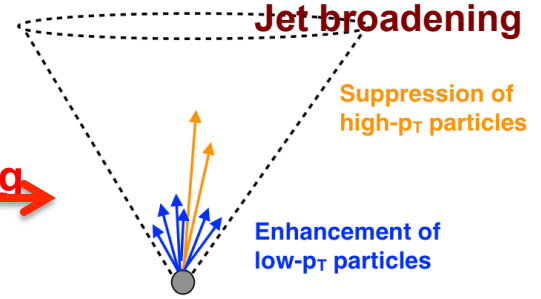
- Kinetic properties
- Spatial distribution of jet constituents
- Particle specie composition

Many studies performed

Jets in vacuum



Jets in medium



Quenching  
effects?

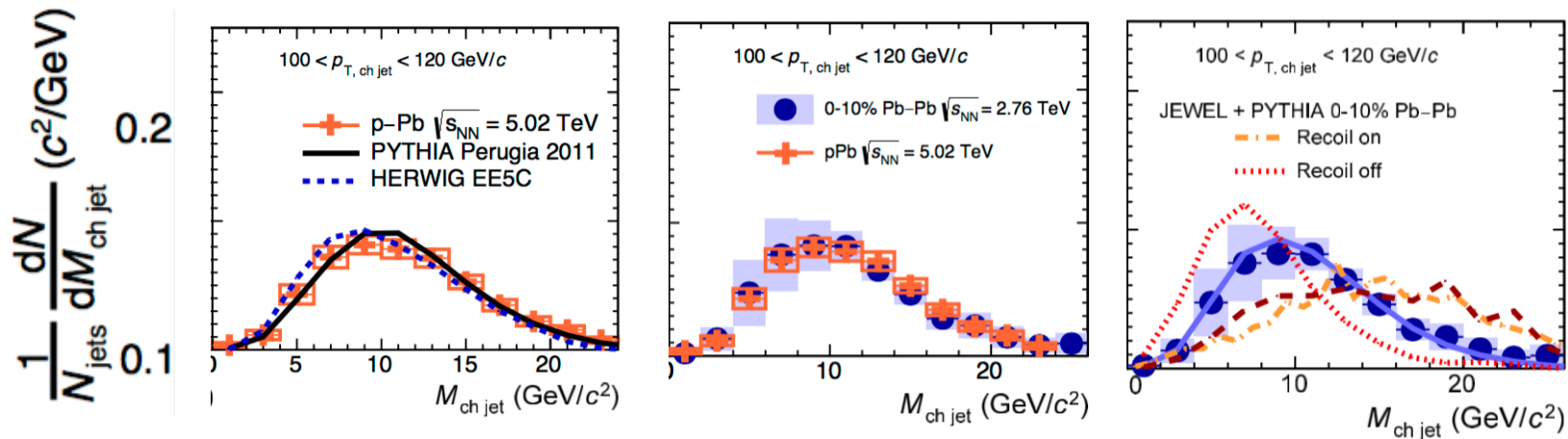
# Jet-structure modifications

- First measurement of jet mass in Pb-Pb (and in p-Pb):

$$M = \sqrt{p^2 - p_T^2 - p_z^2}$$

$$p_z = \sum_{i=1}^n p_{T_i} \sinh \eta_i, \quad p = \sum_{i=1}^n p_{T_i} \cosh \eta_i$$

- Large  $M$ : soft constituents far from jet axis
- Small  $M$ : few hard constituents close to axis
- $\langle M_{\text{quark jet}} \rangle < \langle M_{\text{gluon jet}} \rangle$

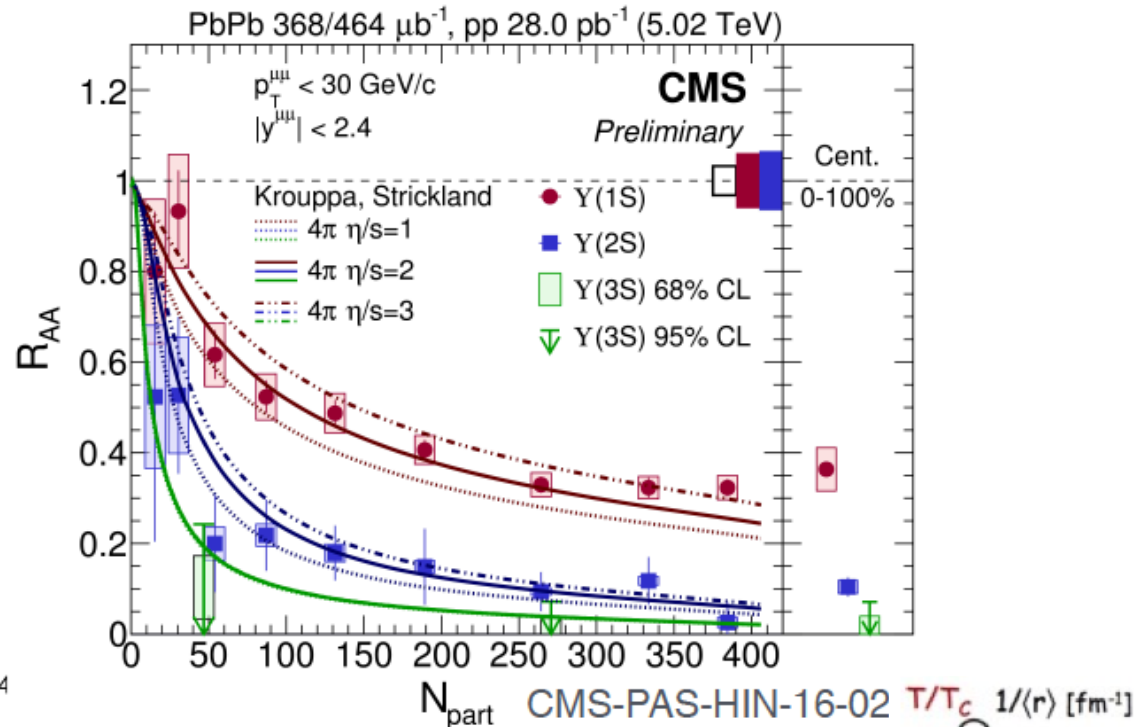
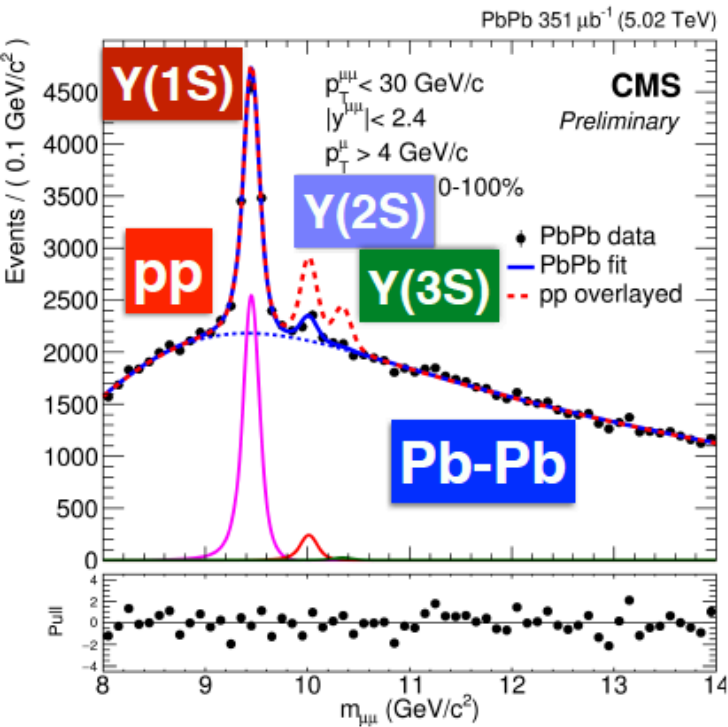


p-Pb baseline described by PYTHIA and HERWIG

**No significant modification of jet structure in central Pb-Pb wrt p-Pb**

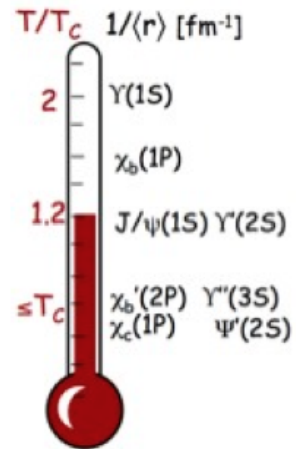
Pb-Pb better described by PYTHIA than by generators with gluon radiation in a QGP

# Bottomonium suppression



- $Y(1s)$  ( $E_{\text{binding}} \sim 1100$  MeV),  $Y(2s)$  and  $Y(3s)$  ( $E_b \sim 200$  MeV) have different sensitivity to the medium
- Strong suppression of  $Y(2s, 3s)$  with respect to  $Y(1s)$  increasing with centrality

→ Trend expected from “sequential suppression”





# Few introductory concepts: centrality, $R_{AA}$

**Nuclear modification factor ( $R_{AA}$ ):** compare particle production in Pb-Pb with that in pp scaled by a “geometrical” factor (from Glauber model) to account for the larger number of nucleon-nucleon collisions

$$R_{AA}(p_T) = \frac{dN_{AA} / dp_T}{\langle N_{coll} \rangle \times dN_{pp} / dp_T}$$

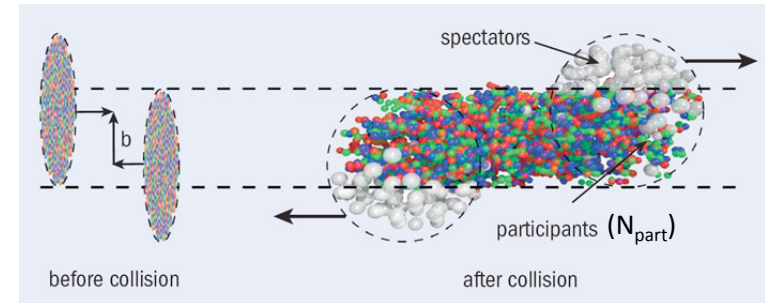
Pb-Pb

PP

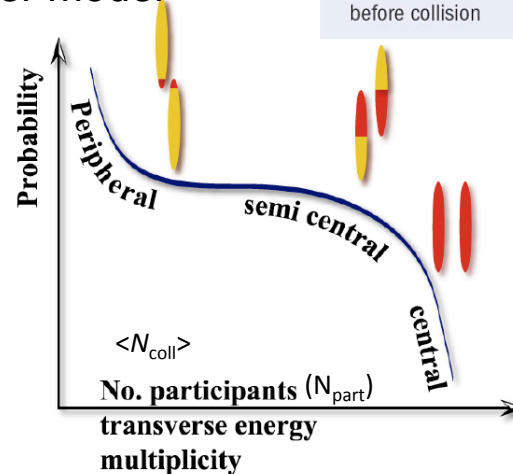
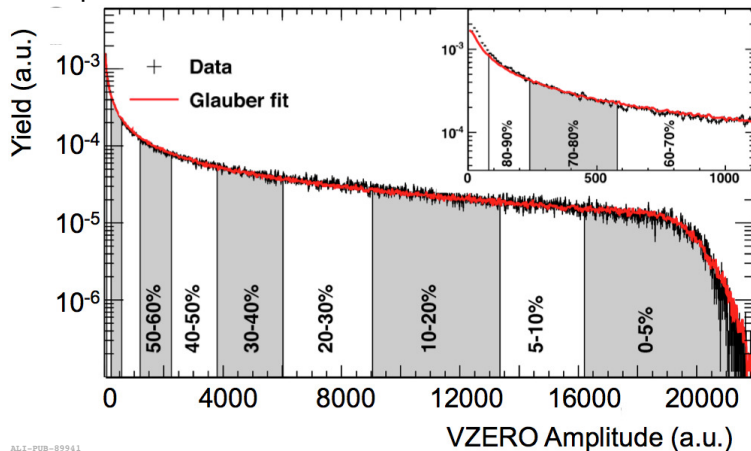
Binary nucleon-nucleon collisions, encodes collision geometry

If  $R_{AA}=1 \rightarrow$  no nuclear effects

If  $R_{AA} \neq 1 \rightarrow$  nuclear effects



$\langle N_{part} \rangle, \langle N_{coll} \rangle$  from “geometrical” Glauber model



Note:  $N_{coll}$  scaling expected to hold only for hard (rare) processes

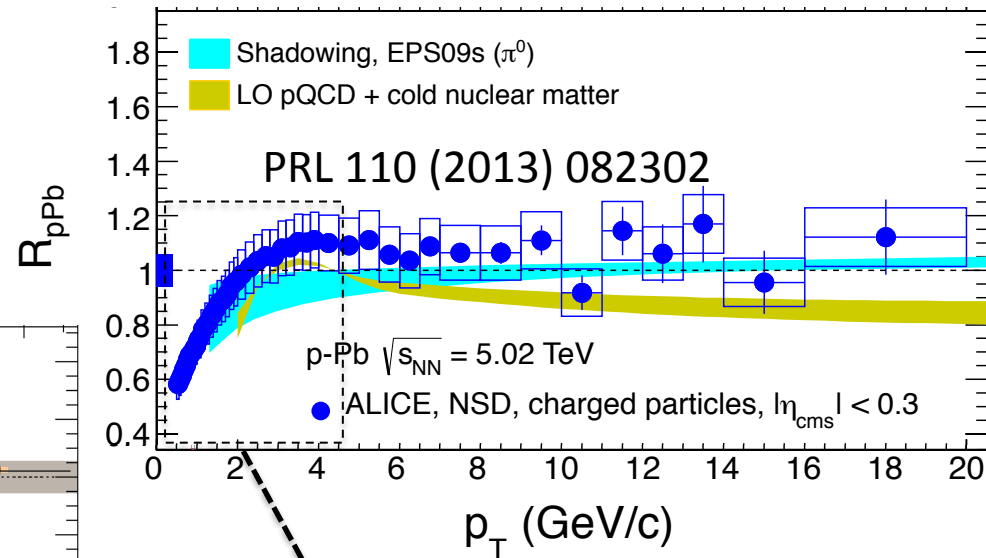
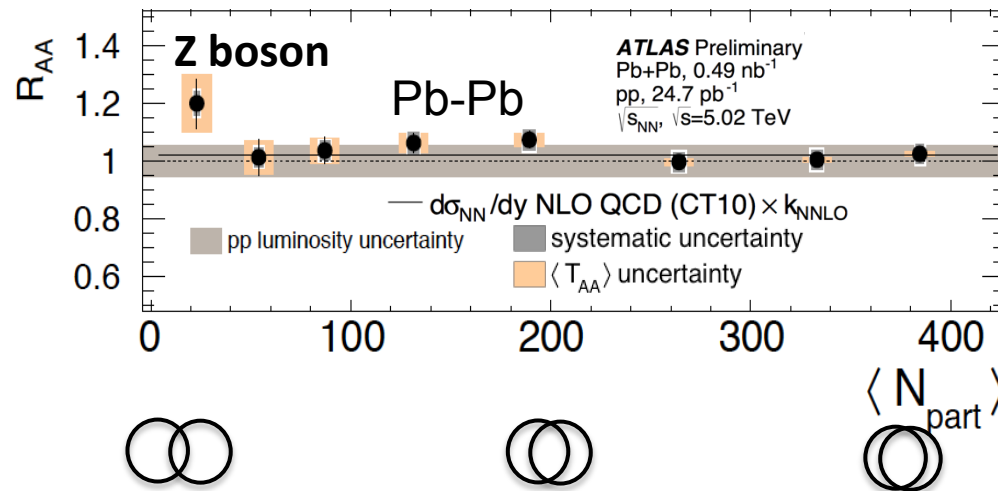
~ particle multiplicity/deposited energy

# Geometry of heavy ion collisions

How can we be sure that we have the collision geometry under control?

Smaller/simpler collision systems (QGP not formed / not big impact on hard-probes production)

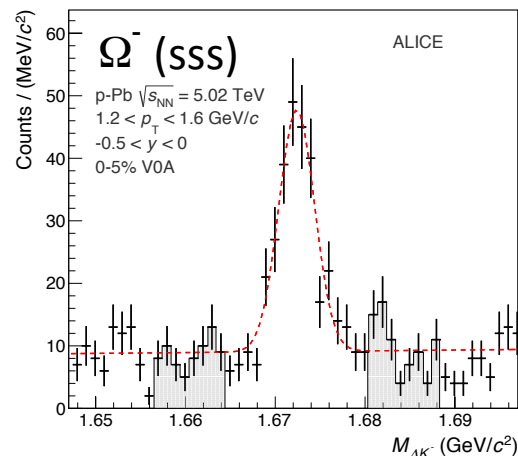
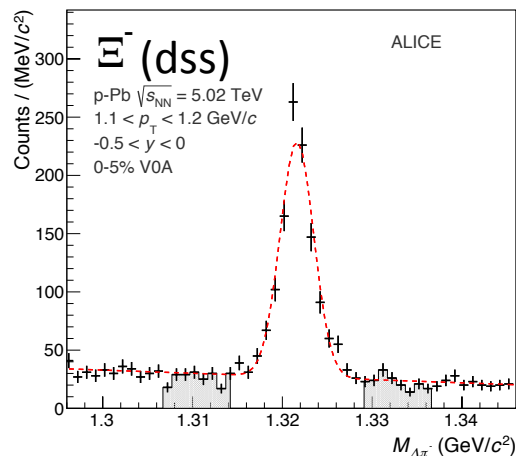
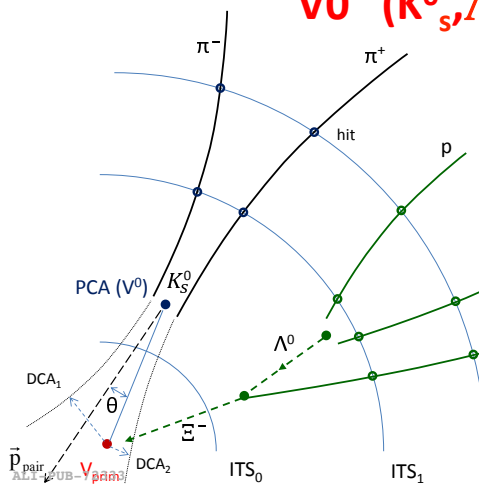
Probes not sensitive to medium formation  
→ electroweak signals ( $\gamma, W, Z$  bosons)



Caveats: breaking of  $N_{coll}$  scaling (soft processes) + initial state/ cold-nuclear matter effects at low  $p_T$

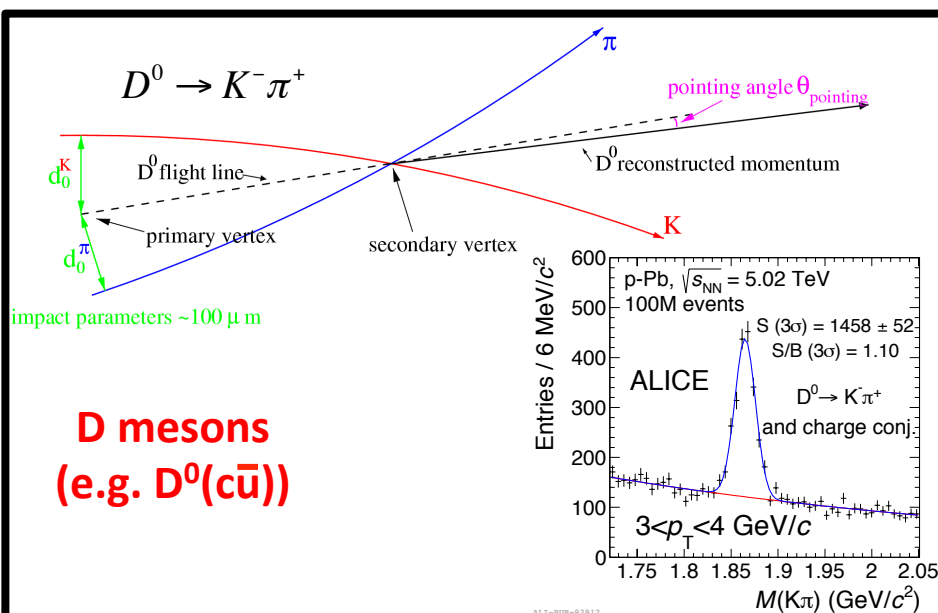
# Signals reconstructed with central barrel

## "V0" ( $K^0, \Lambda^0$ ) and "Cascades" ( $\Xi, \Omega$ )

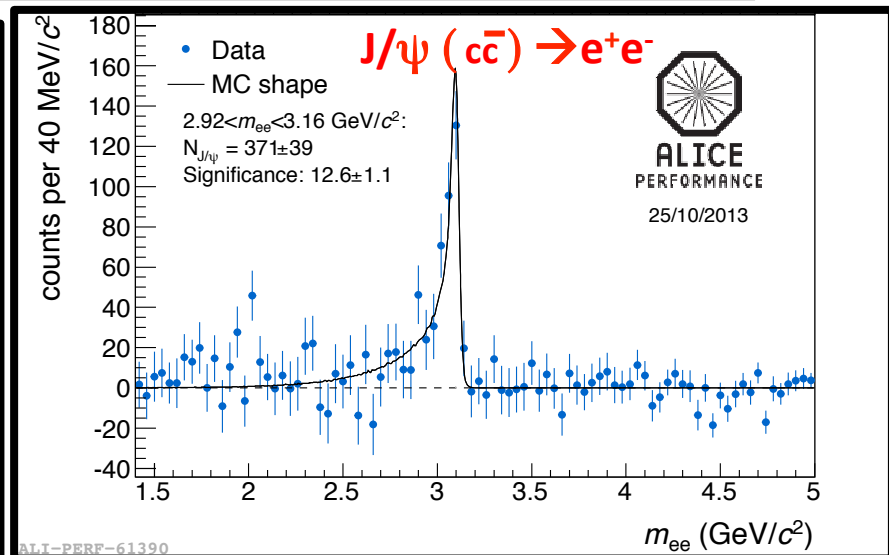


ALI-PUB-103594

ALI-PUB-103602



ALI-PUB-93912

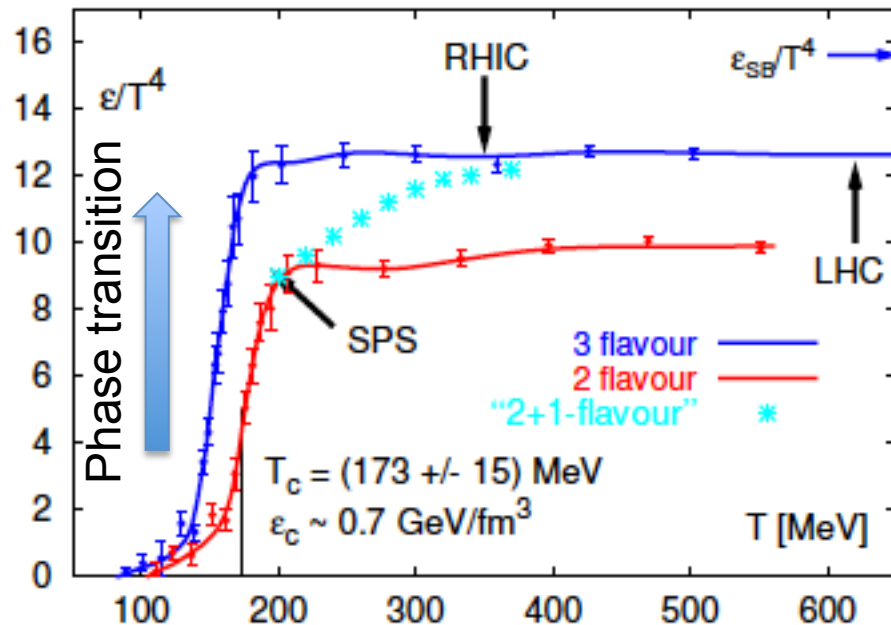


+ spectra of identified particles

# Lattice QCD: Phase Transition

Lattice QCD is neither a calculation not a simulation: “realization” of QCD over a discretized space. It allows to compute thermodynamical properties of a system even in a non-perturbative regime of QCD

$$\frac{\varepsilon}{T^4} \text{ vs. } T \longrightarrow \text{Proportional to number of degrees of freedom (ndof) (S. Boltzmann's law)}$$



- Zero baryon density, 2(u, d) or 3 (u, d, s) quark flavours
- $\varepsilon$  changes rapidly around  $T_c$
- $\rightarrow$  signal change in number of degrees of freedom
- Most recent calculations:  
 $T_c \sim 155 \text{ MeV} :$   
 $\rightarrow \varepsilon_c \sim 0.6 \text{ GeV/fm}^3$

# Strangeness enhancement

Most of light particle mass (and thus of matter) is due to spontaneous breaking of chiral symmetry of QCD

**In the QGP chiral symmetry is expected to be partially restored (more details in backup)**

[Raf. Rep. elski: Phys88 (1982) 331]

[Rafelski-Müller: Phys. Rev. Lett. 48 (1982) 1066]

Quarks reacquire the “bare” mass values they have in the QCD Lagrangian

$m(u,d): \sim 350 \text{ MeV} \rightarrow \text{a few MeV}$

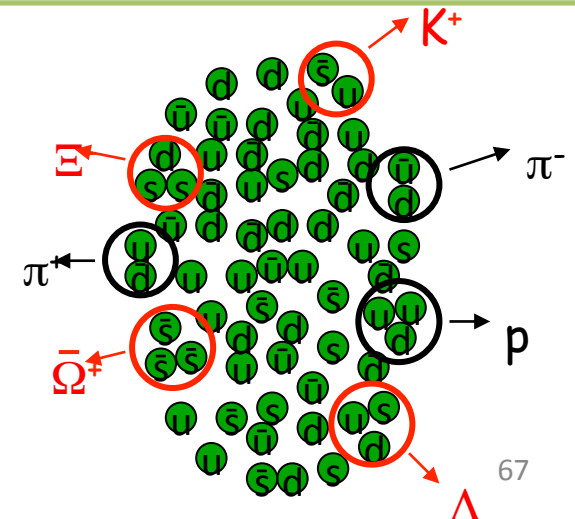
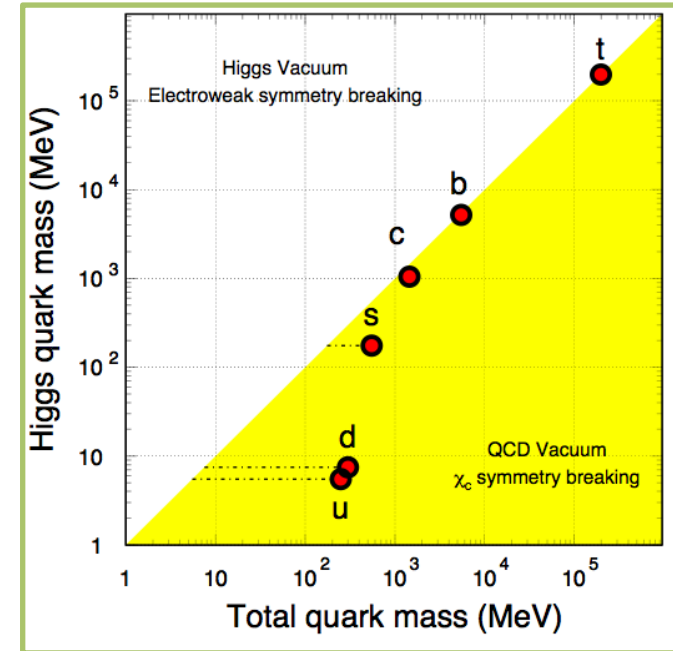
$m(s): \sim 500 \text{ MeV} \rightarrow \sim 150 \text{ MeV}$

The symmetry is exact only for massless particles, therefore its restoration is only partial.

**Consequence:**

→ abundant strange quark pair production

→ easier to form multi-strange hadrons



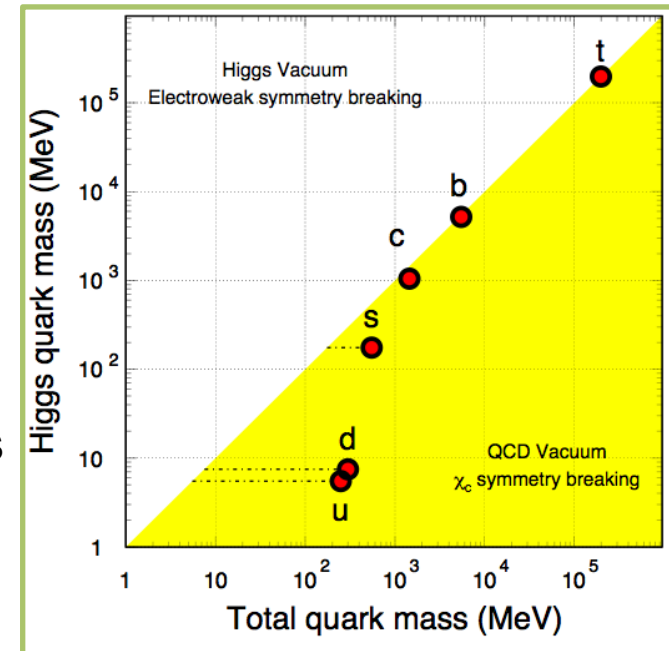
# QCD Lagrangian and spontaneous breaking of chiral symmetry

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{QCD}} = \bar{\psi}_i (i(\gamma^\mu D_\mu)_{ij} - \cancel{m} \delta_{ij}) \psi_j - \frac{1}{4} G_{\mu\nu}^a G_a^{\mu\nu} \quad \text{with } m = \text{"bare" mass}$$

In the limit of **vanishing quark masses**, the QCD Lagrangian becomes symmetric under transformations under the group  $SU(N_f)_L \times SU(N_f)_R$  : **chiral symmetry**.

However, chiral symmetry is spontaneously broken by the non-zero expectation value of the chiral condensate in vacuum,  $\langle \psi \bar{\psi} \rangle \neq 0$ , i.e. the QCD vacuum (at  $T=0$ ) breaks the chiral symmetry. This mechanism generates a **"dynamical" mass for quarks**, which is responsible for **most of the matter mass**.

This symmetry is approximately valid for u,d,(s) quarks (lightest).



X.Zhu et al., PLB 647 (2007) 366



# Restoration of bare quark masses in the QGP ( $T > 0$ )

Deconfinement is expected to be accompanied by a “**Partial Restoration of Chiral Symmetry**”, due to the vanishing of the  $\langle \psi \bar{\psi} \rangle$  expectation value. Quarks reacquire the “bare” mass values they have in the QCD Lagrangian

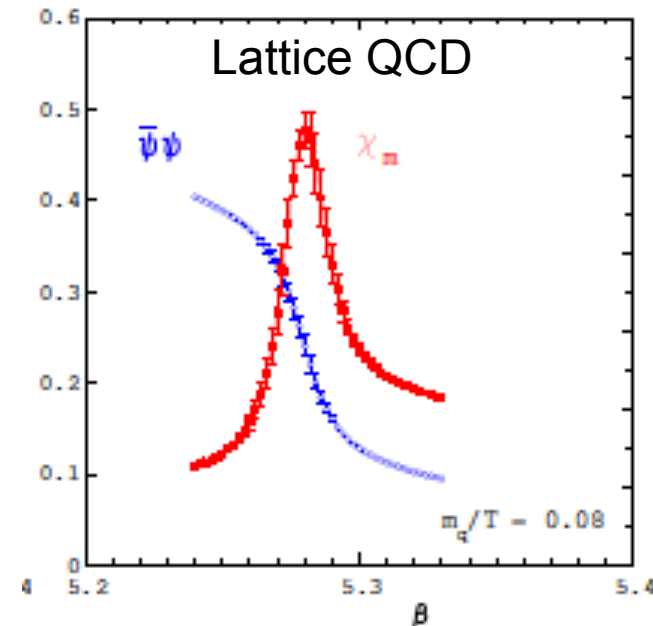
- $m(u,d): \sim 350 \text{ MeV} \rightarrow \text{a few MeV}$
- $m(s): \sim 500 \text{ MeV} \rightarrow \sim 150 \text{ MeV}$

Since the symmetry is exact only for massless particles, therefore its restoration here is only partial.

Consequence:

it's easier to produce strange quarks!

Strangeness enhancement searched for as a proof of chiral symmetry restoration ( - - > deconfinement, with some caveats)



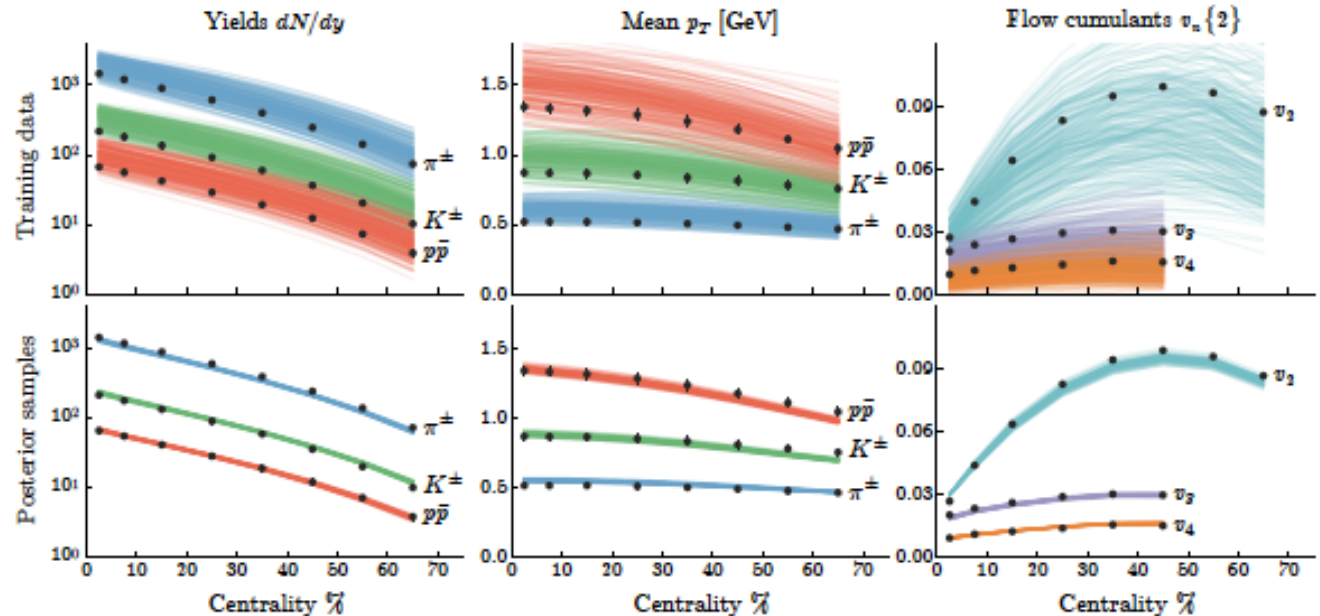
F. Karsch. Lattice QCD at High Temperature and Density. Lecture Notes of Physics, vol. 583, 2002.  
[arXiv:hep-lat/0106019](https://arxiv.org/abs/hep-lat/0106019)

# Constraining further viscosity: example with a model

J. E. Bernhard et al. Phys. Rev. C 94, 024907 (2016)

9 parameters: 3 initial state, 4 for QGP response, 2 model parameters

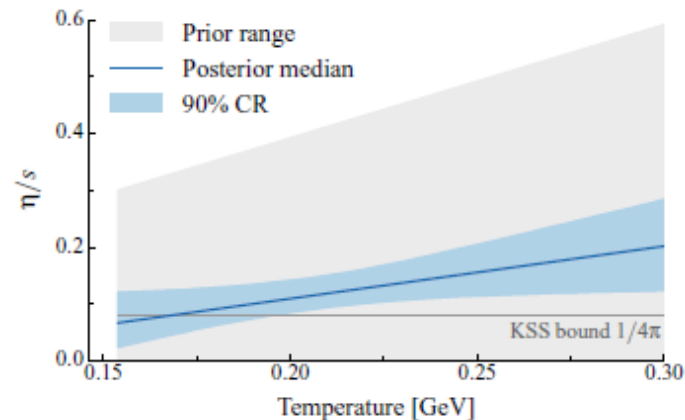
Particle yields,  $\langle p_T \rangle$ ,  
flow coefficients used to  
calibrate the model  
parameters to reproduce  
data



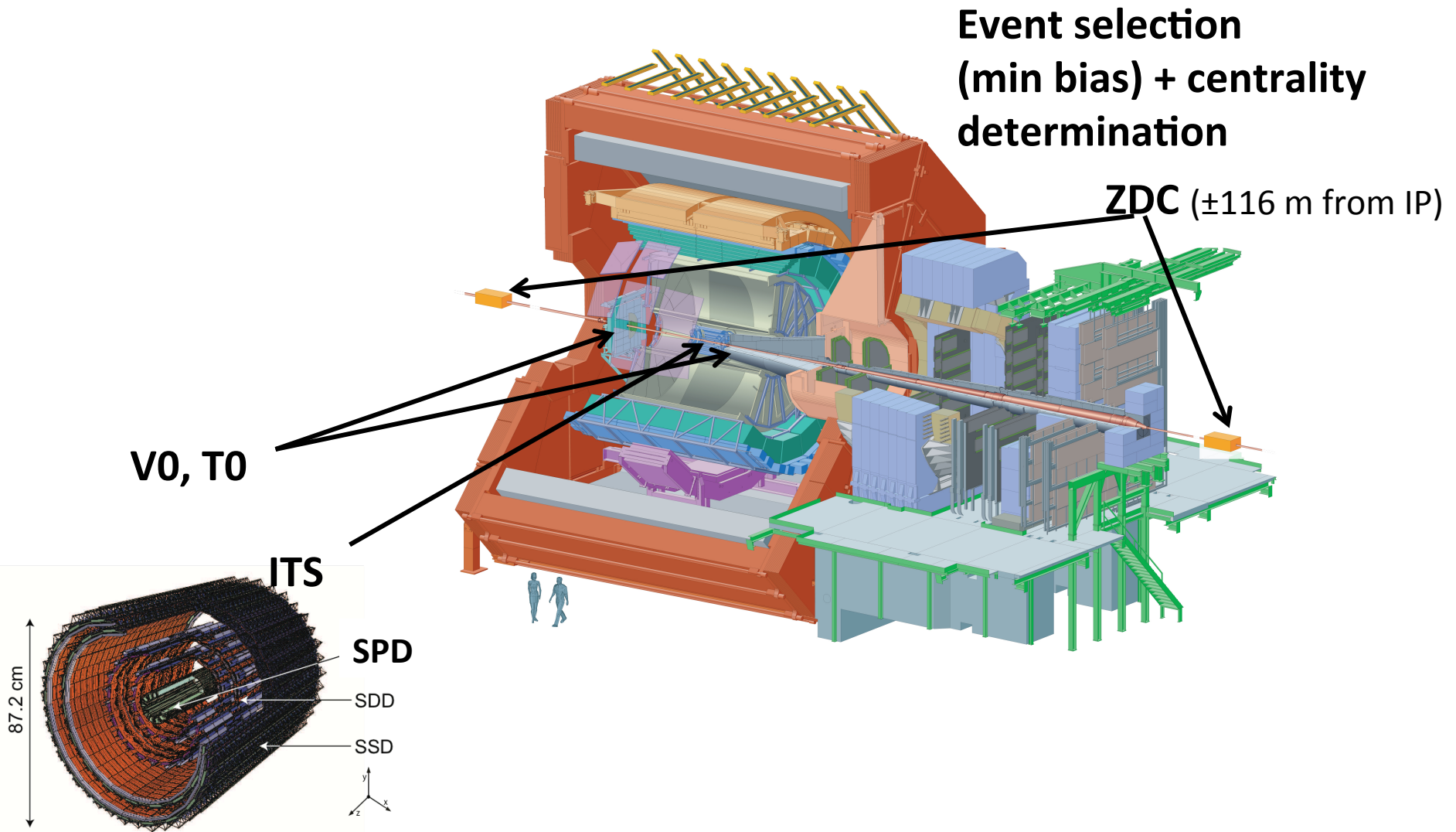
Bayes method used to extract probability distribution for  
the true values of the parameters

**Main results: viscosity vs. temperature**

**QGP viscosity very low  
(lower than any atomic matter)**



# The ALICE detector: “small-angle” detectors



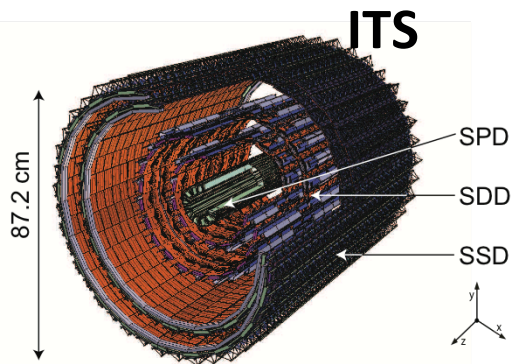
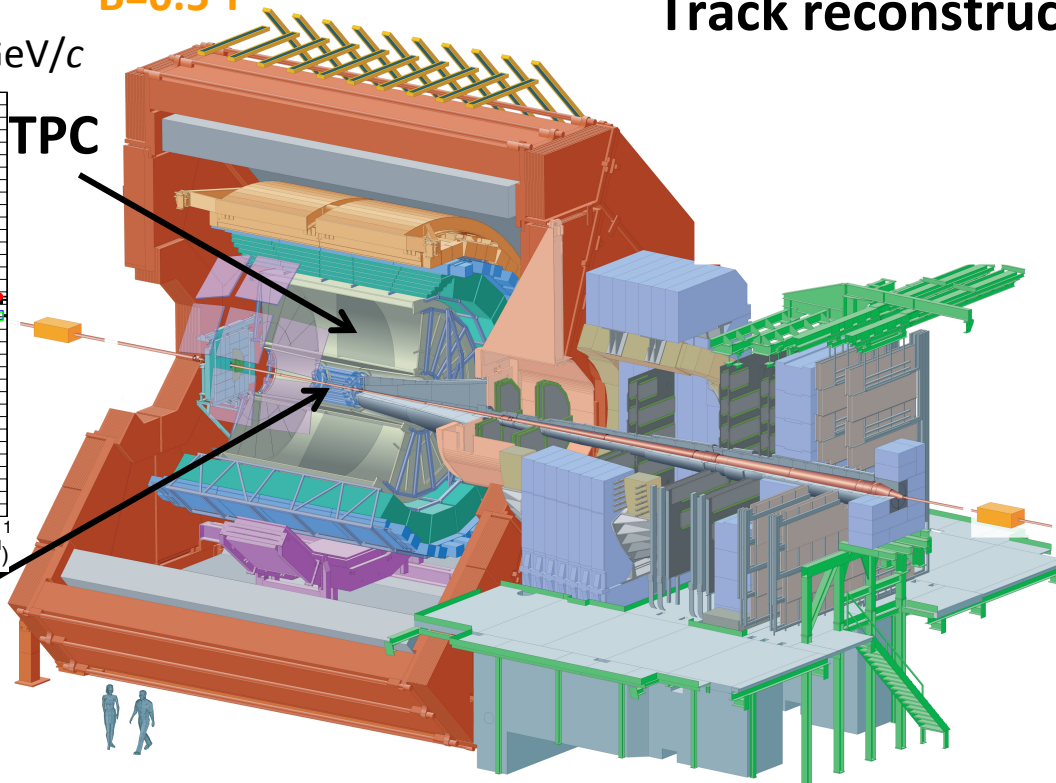
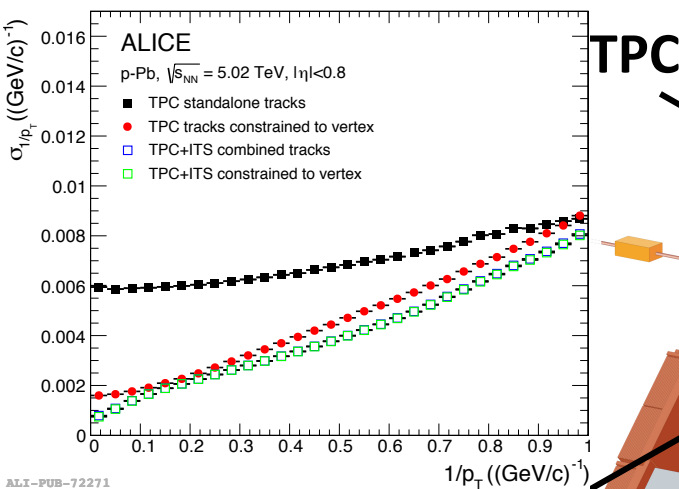
# The ALICE detector: central barrel

$|\eta| < 0.9$

$B = 0.5 \text{ T}$

Track reconstruction

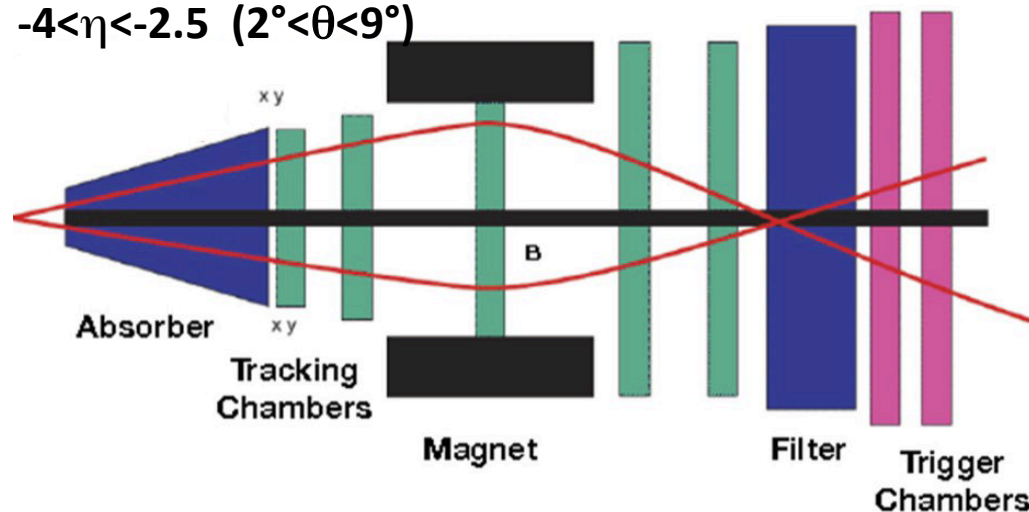
Transverse momentum ( $p_T$ )  
resolution: 0.8% (2%) at 1 (10) GeV/c



# The ALICE detector: forward muon spectrometer

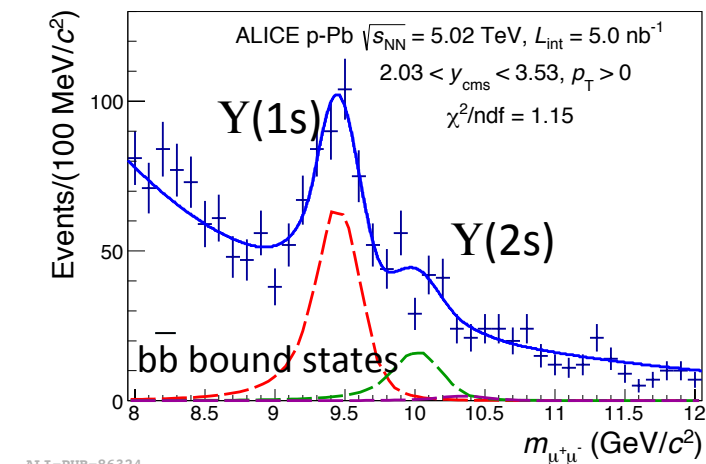
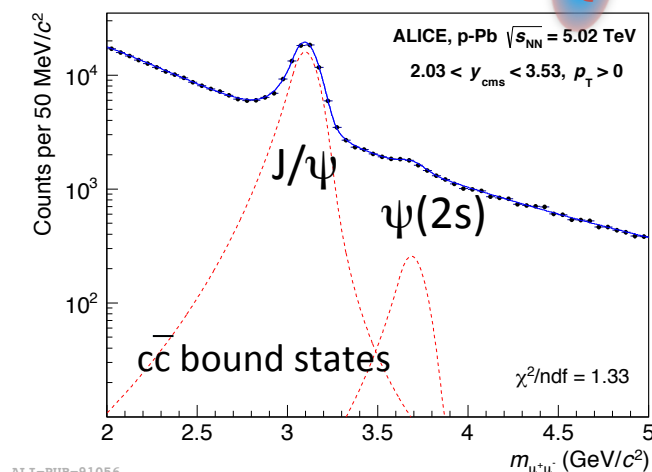
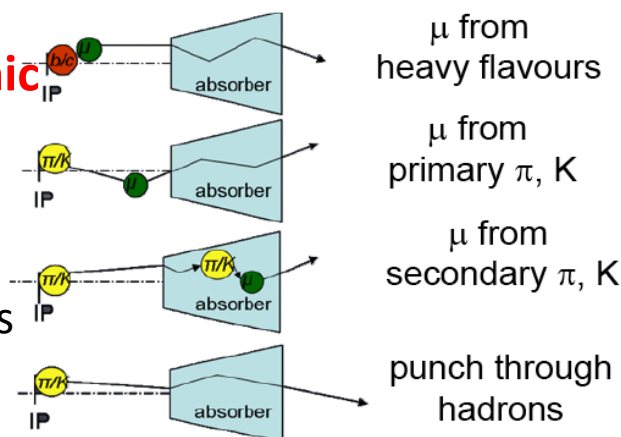
## MUON SPECTROMETER

$-4 < \eta < -2.5$  ( $2^\circ < \theta < 9^\circ$ )



**Muons from semi-leptonic heavy-flavour hadron decays**

$D, B, \Lambda_c, \dots \rightarrow \mu X$   
(after subtraction of muons from non-HF sources)

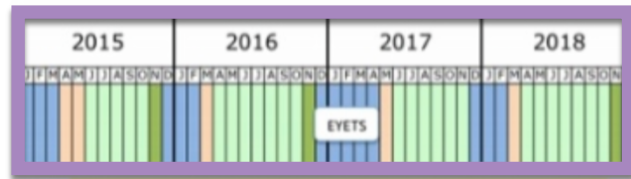


ALI-PUB-86324



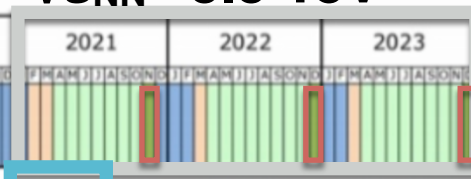
# High Luminosity (HL)-LHC era

**RUN2**  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02 \text{ TeV}$

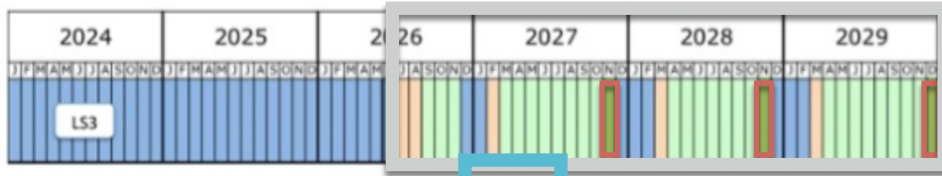


Run2 :  $\mathcal{L}^{Pb-Pb}_{integrated} = 1.0 \text{ nb}^{-1}$

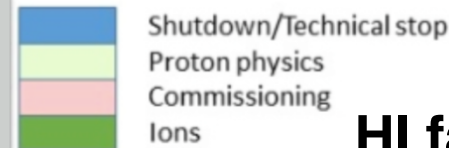
$\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.5 \text{ TeV}$



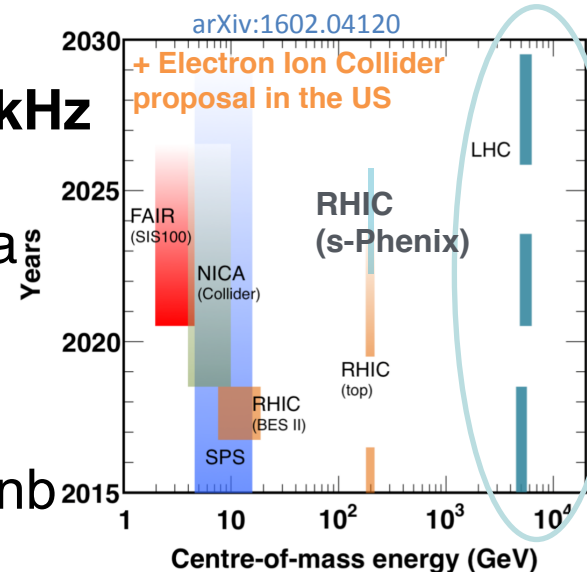
Run3 :  $\mathcal{L}^{Pb-Pb}_{integrated} = 6.0 \text{ nb}^{-1}$



Run4 :  $\mathcal{L}^{Pb-Pb}_{integrated} = 7.0 \text{ nb}^{-1}$



## HI facilities up to 2030



- LS2:**
- LHC injector upgrades: interaction rate **up to 50kHz** (now <10 kHz)

→ x10 more statistics w.r.t. the current available data

- Experiments upgrade LS2 and LS3

### Run 3+4: “HL-HI-LHC”

- All the four LHC experiments will participate to HI program
  - request: 1 month of Pb-Pb collisions/year > 10/nb
    - corresponds to x100 more statistics for min. bias for ALICE

- Possible interest by experiment for lighter ion run (Ar or Xe)



# ALICE upgrade: New ITS

Design requirements:

## 1. Improve impact parameter resolution by a factor $\sim 3$ (5) in $r\phi$ (z)

- Reduce pixel size (currently  $50\text{ }\mu\text{m} \times 425\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ )
  - monolithic (MAPS) with size  $\sim 28\text{ }\mu\text{m} \times 28\text{ }\mu\text{m}$
- Go closer to interaction point:
  - new smaller beam pipe:  $2.9\text{ cm} \rightarrow 1.9\text{ cm}$
  - first layer with smaller radius ( $2.3\text{ cm}$ , currently  $3.9\text{ cm}$ )
- Reduce material thickness:  $50\text{ }\mu\text{m}$  silicon,  $X/X_0$  from current  $\sim 1.13\%$  to  $\sim 0.3(0.8)\%$  per layer

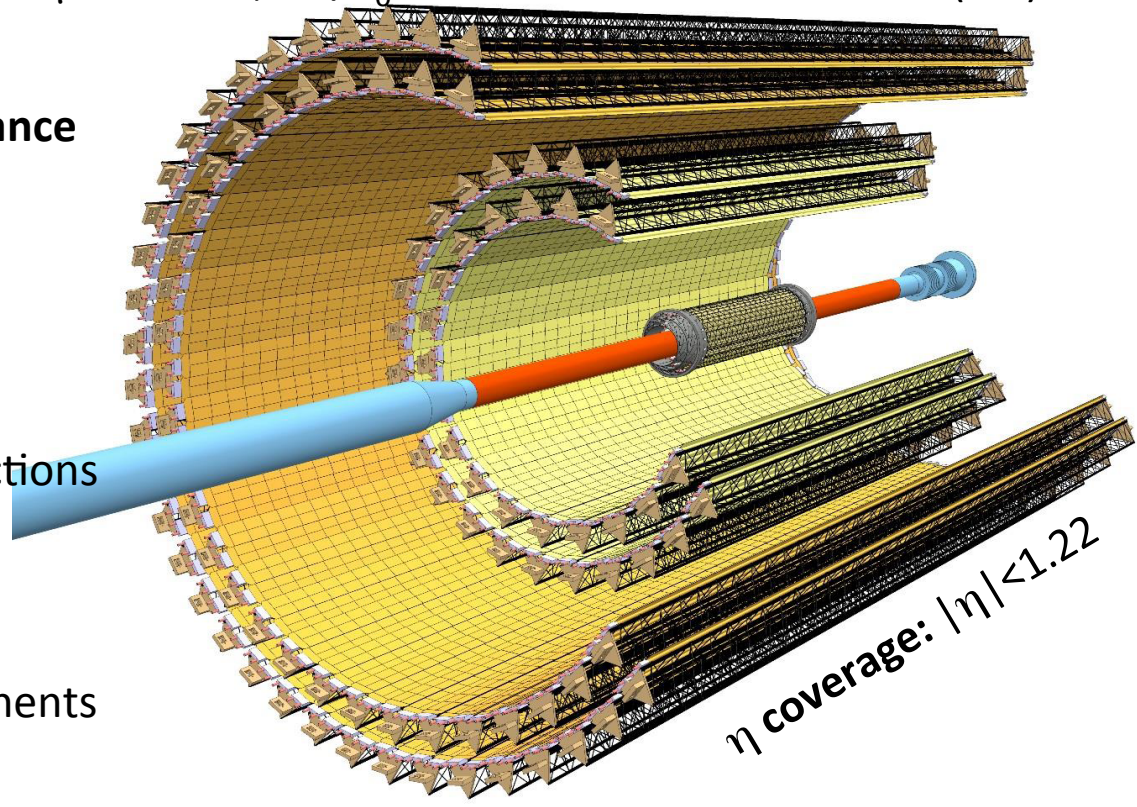
## 2. High standalone tracking performance

(efficiency, spatial and momentum resolutions)

- Increase granularity
- Add 1 layer (from 6 to 7)

## 3. Faster (x50) readout: Pb-Pb interactions up to 100 kHz

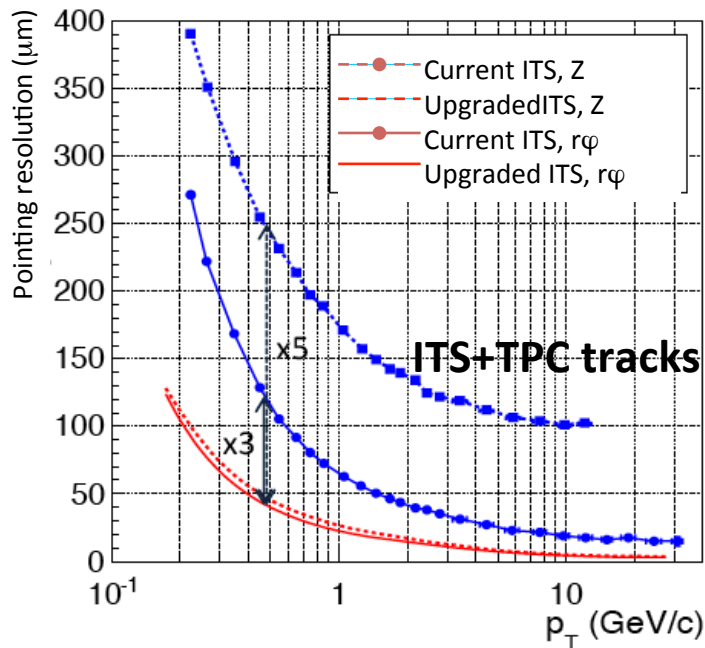
## 4. Maintenance: allow for removal/insertion of faulty detector components during annual winter shutdown



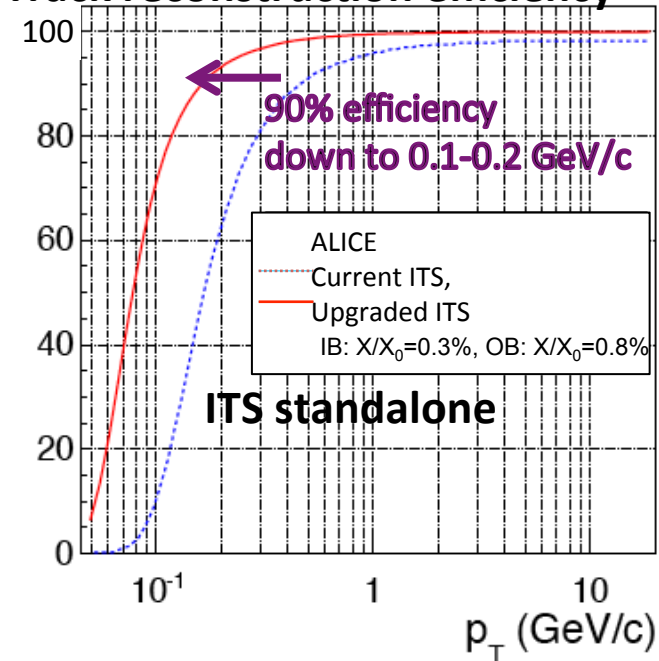
# New ITS: performance

Studies done with simulations with realistic and complete detector geometry and material budget description.

## Track spatial resolution at the primary vertex

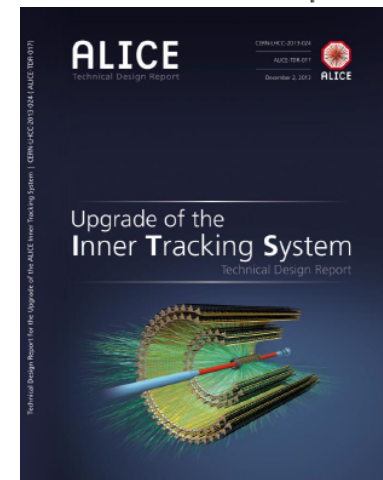


## Track reconstruction efficiency

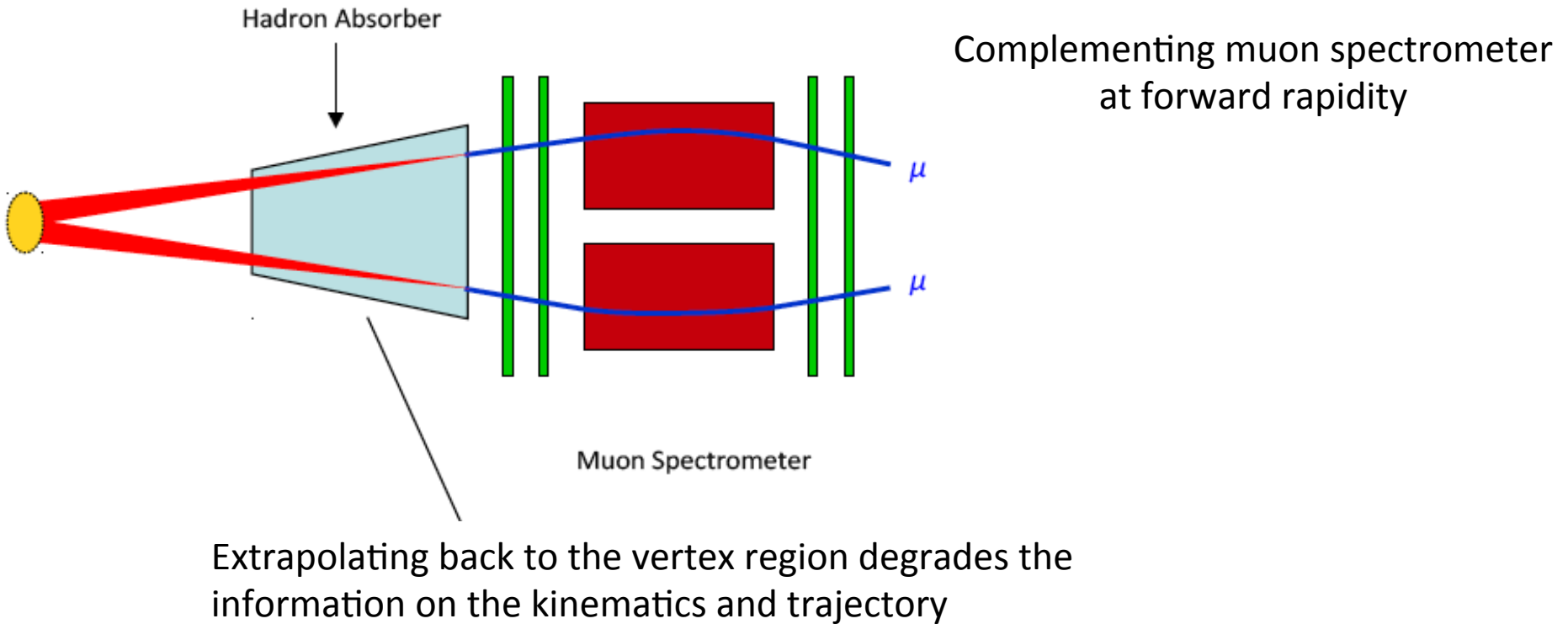


Find more in ALICE  
ITS TDR:

CERN-LHCC-2013-024 ; ALICE-TDR-017

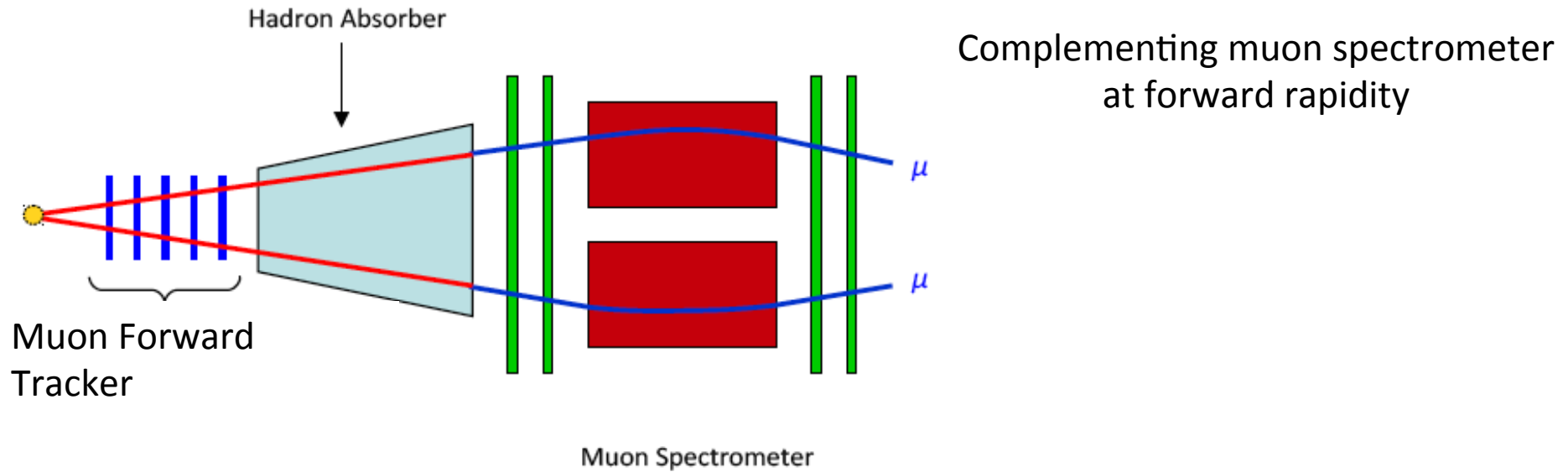


# Muon Forward Tracker

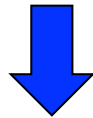


→ Cannot separate prompt and displaced muons

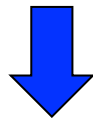
# Muon Forward Tracker



Muon tracks are extrapolated and matched to the MFT clusters before the absorber

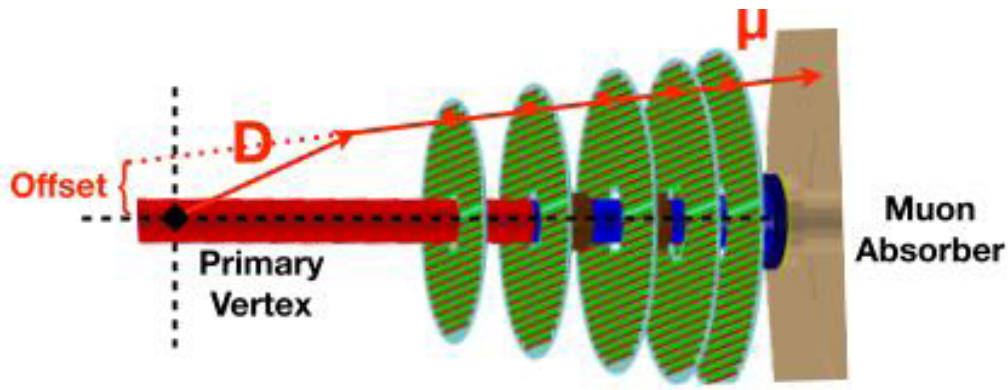


High pointing accuracy



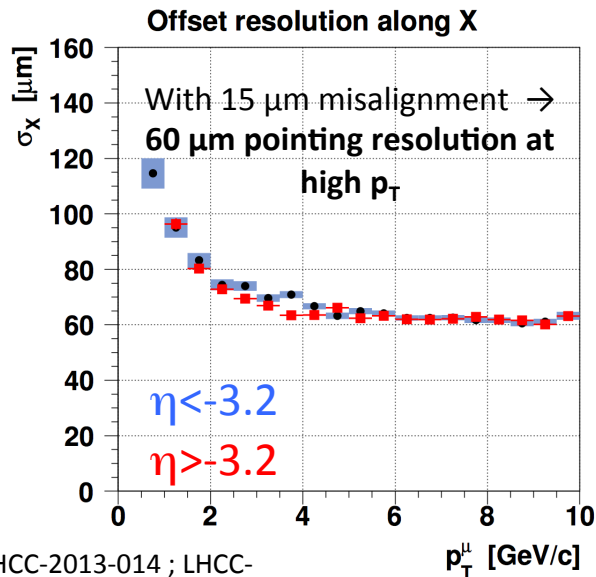
Separation of charm and beauty signals (single  $\mu$ ,  $J/\psi$ )

# Muon Forward Tracker



**5-6 planes of CMOS silicon pixel sensors**  
(same technology as ITS):

- $50 < z < 80$  cm
- $R_{\min} \approx 2.5$  cm (beam pipe constraint)
- $11 < R_{\max} < 16$  cm
- Area  $\approx 2700$  cm<sup>2</sup>
- $X/X_0 = 0.4\%$  per plane
- Current pixel size scenario:  $\sim 28 \times 28$  μm<sup>2</sup>





# ALICE at high rate: TPC Upgrade

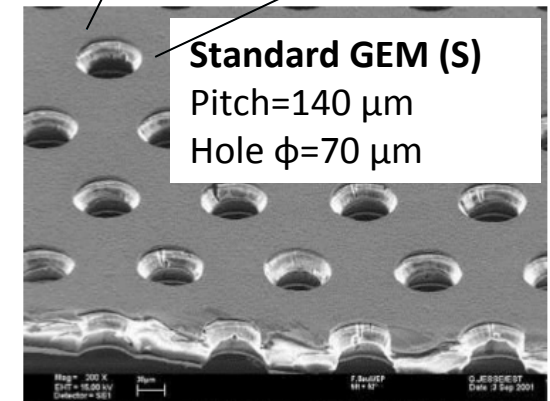
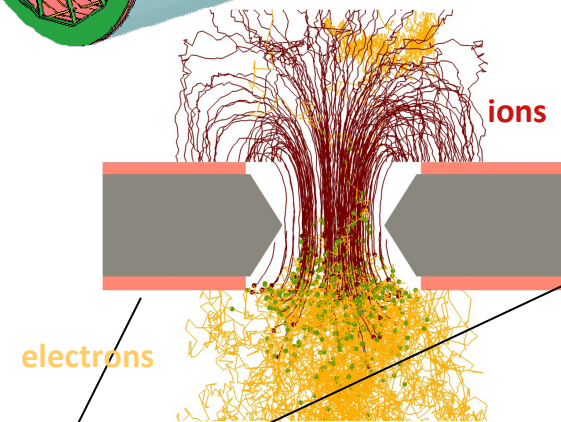
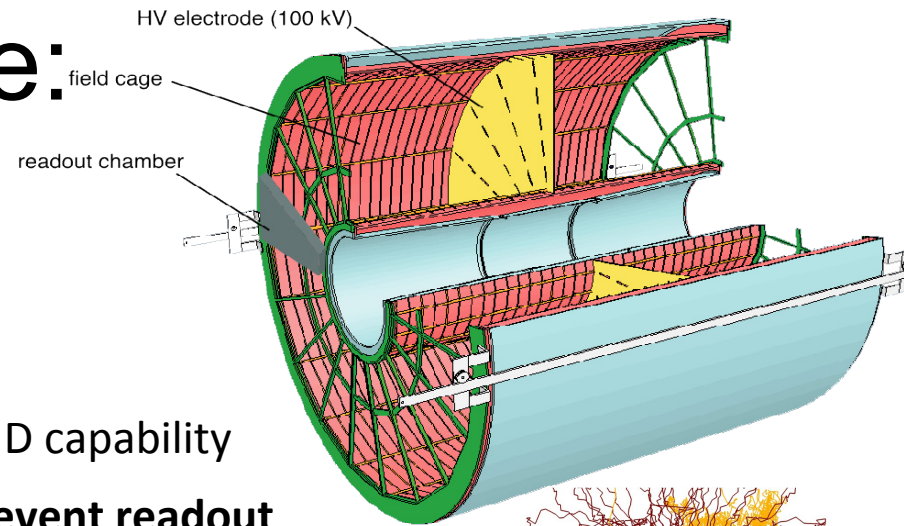
## Goals

- Operate TPC at 50 kHz
- Preserving current momentum resolution and PID capability

**Current TPC readout based on MWPC limits the event readout rate to 3.5 kHz**

## → Upgrade TPC strategy

- **New readout chambers:** MWPC replaced with micropattern gaseous detectors, including **GEM (Gas Electron Multiplier)**
  - No gating, small ion backflow
- Redesign TPC front-end and readout electronic systems to allow for continuous readout
- Significant online data reduction to comply with the limited bandwidth
  - Online cluster finding and cluster-track association

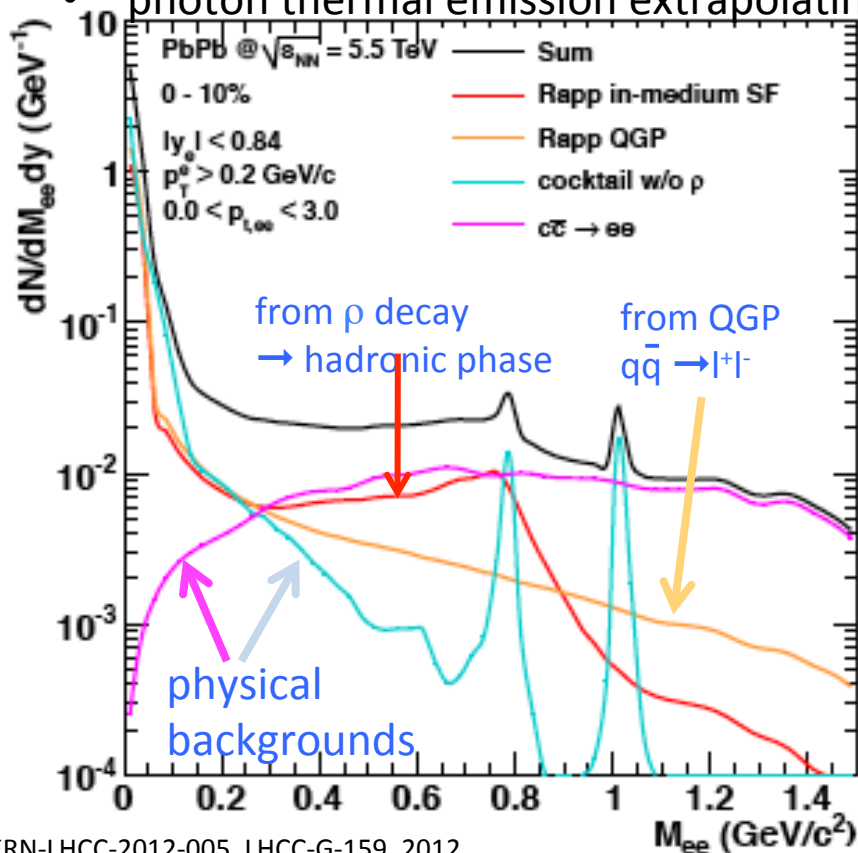




# Di-electron production

One of the most fundamental measurements, sensitive to:

- chiral-symmetry restoration by modification of  $\rho$ -meson spectral function
- partonic equation of state studying space-time evolution with invariant-mass and  $p_T$  distributions of dileptons
- photon thermal emission extrapolating to zero dilepton mass



Target measurements:

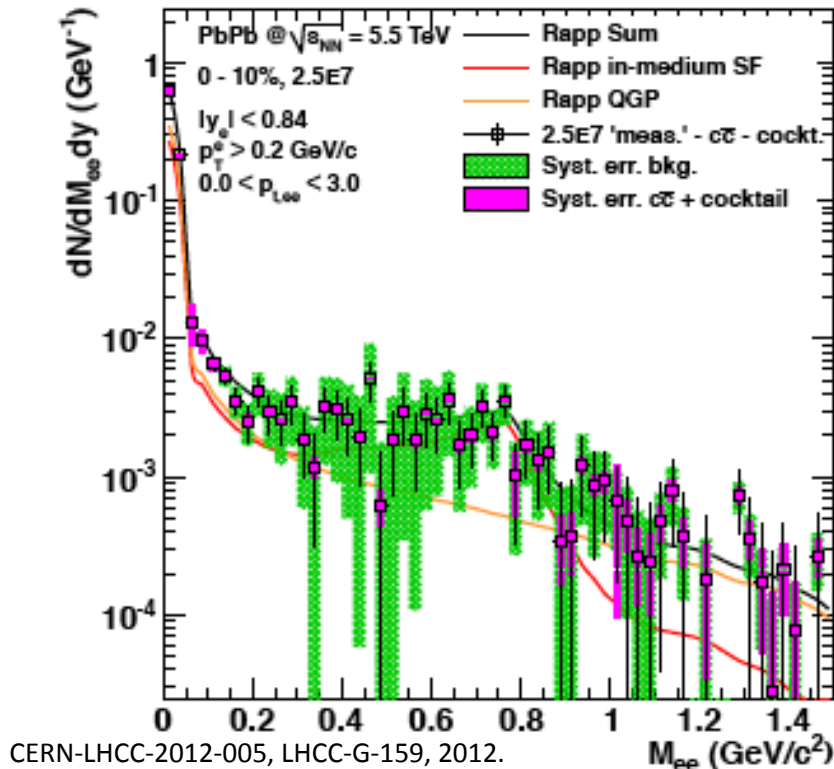
- di-electron yield vs. mass and  $p_T$  (require background subtraction)
- di-electron elliptic flow

New ITS

- Reduced combinatorial background (reduce impact of  $\gamma$ -conversions)
- Charm rejection

# Di-electron production

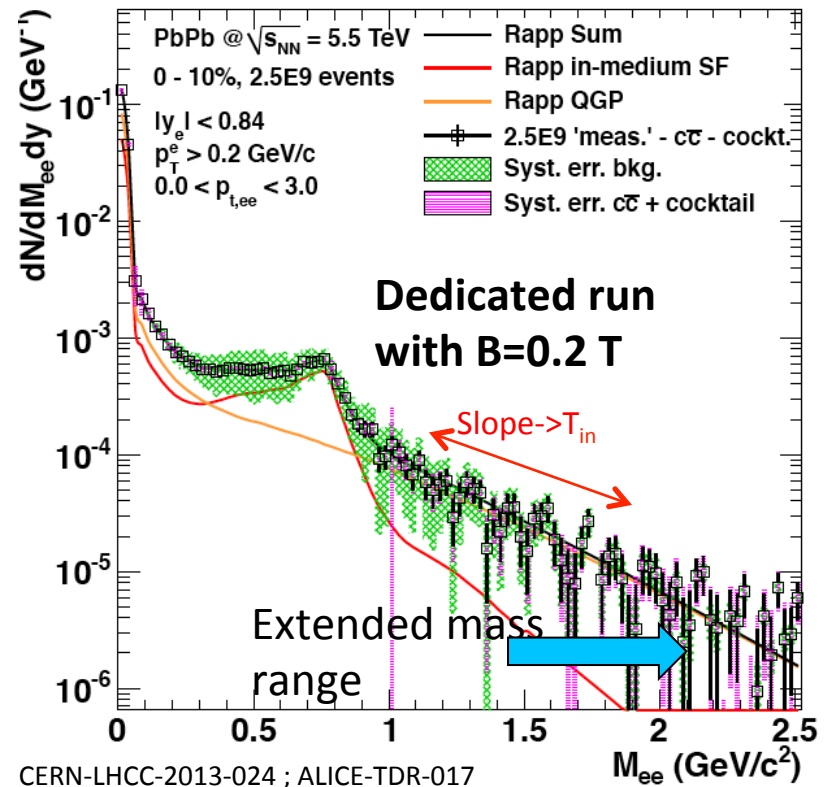
Excess after background subtraction



current ITS and event rate:

large statistical and systematic uncertainties

Allows for an estimation of the **temperature at various phases of system expansion** with 10-20% precision (stat.+syst.)



new ITS and high-rate:

**precise measurement**