

Transverse Momentum Distribution and Nuclear Modification Factor of Charged Particles in $p + \text{Pb}$ Collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02 \text{ TeV}$

B. Abelev *et al.**

(ALICE Collaboration)

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The transverse momentum (p_T) distribution of primary charged particles is measured in minimum bias (non-single-diffractive) $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02 \text{ TeV}$ with the ALICE detector at the LHC. The p_T spectra measured near central rapidity in the range $0.5 < p_T < 20 \text{ GeV}/c$ exhibit a weak pseudorapidity dependence. The nuclear modification factor $R_{p\text{Pb}}$ is consistent with unity for p_T above $2 \text{ GeV}/c$. This measurement indicates that the strong suppression of hadron production at high p_T observed in $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions at the LHC is not due to an initial-state effect. The measurement is compared to theoretical calculations.

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Measurements of particle production in proton-nucleus collisions at high energies allow the study of fundamental properties of quantum chromodynamics (QCD) at low parton fractional momentum x and high gluon densities (see Ref. [1] for a recent review). They also provide a reference measurement for the studies of deconfined matter created in nucleus-nucleus collisions [2].

Parton energy loss in hot QCD matter is expected to lead to a modification of energetic jets in this medium (jet quenching) [3]. Originating from energetic partons produced in initial hard collisions, hadrons at high transverse momentum p_T are an important observable for the study of deconfined matter. Experiments at RHIC have shown [4,5] that the production of charged hadrons at high p_T in $\text{Au} + \text{Au}$ collisions is suppressed compared to the expectation from an independent superposition of nucleon-nucleon collisions (binary collision scaling).

By colliding Pb nuclei at the LHC, it was shown [6–8] that the production of charged hadrons in central collisions at a center-of-mass (c.m.s.) collision energy per nucleon pair $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76 \text{ TeV}$ shows a stronger suppression than at RHIC, indicating a state of QCD matter with an even higher energy density. At the LHC, the suppression remains substantial up to $100 \text{ GeV}/c$ [7,8] and is also seen in reconstructed jets [9]. A $p + \text{Pb}$ control experiment is needed to establish whether the initial state of the colliding nuclei plays a role in the observed suppression of hadron production at high p_T in $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions. In addition, $p + \text{Pb}$ data should also provide tests of models that describe QCD matter at high gluon density, giving

insight into phenomena such as parton shadowing or gluon saturation [1].

In this Letter, we present a measurement of the p_T distributions of charged particles in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02 \text{ TeV}$. The data were recorded with the ALICE detector [10] during a short LHC $p + \text{Pb}$ run performed in September 2012 in preparation for the main run scheduled at the beginning of 2013. Each beam contained 13 bunches; 8 pairs of bunches were colliding in the ALICE interaction region, providing a luminosity of about $8 \times 10^{25} \text{ cm}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$. The interaction region had an rms width of 6.3 cm in the longitudinal direction and of about $60 \mu\text{m}$ in the transverse directions.

The trigger required a signal in either of two arrays of 32 scintillator tiles each, covering full azimuth and $2.8 < \eta_{\text{lab}} < 5.1$ (VZERO-A) and $-3.7 < \eta_{\text{lab}} < -1.7$ (VZERO-C), respectively. The pseudorapidity in the detector reference frame, $\eta_{\text{lab}} = -\ln[\tan(\theta/2)]$, with θ the polar angle between the charged particle and the beam axis, is defined such that the proton beam has negative η_{lab} . This configuration led to a trigger rate of about 200 Hz, with a hadronic collision rate of about 150 Hz. The efficiency of the VZERO trigger was estimated from a control sample of events triggered by signals from two zero degree calorimeters positioned symmetrically at 112.5 m from the interaction point, with an energy resolution of about 20% for single neutrons of a few TeV.

The off-line event selection is identical to that used for the analysis of charged-particle pseudorapidity density ($dN_{\text{ch}}/d\eta_{\text{lab}}$) reported in Ref. [11]. A signal is required in both VZERO-A and VZERO-C. Beam gas and other machine-induced background events with deposited energy above the thresholds in the VZERO or zero degree calorimeters detectors are suppressed by requiring the signal timing to be compatible with that of a nominal $p + \text{Pb}$ interaction. The remaining background after these requirements is estimated from triggers on noncolliding bunches and found to be negligible. The resulting sample

*Full author list given at end of the article.

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of events consists of non-single-diffractive (NSD) collisions as well as single-diffractive and electromagnetic interactions. The efficiency of the trigger and off-line event selection for the different interactions is estimated using a combination of event generators; see Ref. [11] for details. An efficiency of 99.2% for NSD collisions is estimated, with a negligible contamination from single-diffractive and electromagnetic interactions. The number of events used for the analysis is 1.7×10^6 .

The primary vertex position is determined with tracks reconstructed in the inner tracking system and the time projection chamber by using the χ^2 minimization procedure described in Ref. [8]. The event vertex reconstruction algorithm is fully efficient for events with at least one track in the acceptance, $|\eta_{\text{lab}}| < 1.4$ (when the center of the interaction region is included as an additional constraint). An event is accepted if the coordinate of the reconstructed vertex measured along the beam direction is within ± 10 cm around the center of the interaction region.

Primary charged particles are defined as all prompt particles produced in the collision, including decay products, except those from weak decays of strange hadrons. Selections based on the number of space points and the quality of the track fit, as well as on the distance of closest approach to the reconstructed vertex, are applied to the reconstructed tracks (see Ref. [8] for details). The efficiency and purity of the primary charged-particle selection are estimated from a Monte Carlo simulation using the DPMJET event generator [12] with particle transport through the detector using GEANT3 [13]. The systematic uncertainties on corrections are estimated via a comparison to a Monte Carlo simulation using the HIJING event generator [14]. The overall primary charged-particle reconstruction efficiency (the product of tracking efficiency and acceptance) for $|\eta_{\text{lab}}| < 0.8$ is 79% at $p_T = 0.5$ GeV/ c , reaches 81% at 0.8 GeV/ c , and decreases to 72% for $p_T > 2$ GeV/ c . From Monte Carlo simulations, it is estimated that the residual contamination from secondary particles is 1.6% at $p_T = 0.5$ GeV/ c and decreases to about 0.6% for $p_T > 2$ GeV/ c .

The transverse momentum of charged particles is determined from the track curvature in the magnetic field of 0.5 T. The p_T resolution is estimated from the space-point residuals to the track fit and verified by the width of the invariant mass of K_S^0 mesons reconstructed in their decay to two charged pions. For the selected tracks, the relative p_T resolution is 1.3% at $p_T = 0.5$ GeV/ c , has a minimum of 1.0% at $p_T = 1$ GeV/ c , and increases linearly to 2.2% at $p_T = 20$ GeV/ c . The uncertainty on the p_T resolution is $\pm 0.7\%$ at $p_T = 20$ GeV/ c , leading to a systematic uncertainty on the differential yield of up to 3% at this p_T value.

Due to the different energy per nucleon of the two colliding beams, imposed by the two-in-one magnet design of the LHC, the nucleon-nucleon c.m.s. moves with a

rapidity $y_{NN} = 0.465$ in the direction of the proton beam. As a consequence, the detector coverage, $|\eta_{\text{lab}}| < 0.8$, implies, for the nucleon-nucleon c.m.s., roughly $-0.3 < \eta_{\text{c.m.s.}} < 1.3$. The calculation of $\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}} = \eta_{\text{lab}} + y_{NN}$ is accurate only for massless particles or at high p_T . Consequently, the differential yield at low p_T suffers from a distortion, which is estimated and corrected for based on the particle composition in the HIJING event generator. For $p_T = 0.5$ GeV/ c , the correction is 1% for $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$ and reaches 3% for $0.8 < \eta_{\text{c.m.s.}} < 1.3$. The systematic uncertainties were estimated by varying the relative particle abundances by factors of 2 around the nominal values. The uncertainty is sizable only at low p_T and is dependent on $\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}$. It is 0.6% for $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$, 4.3% for $0.3 < \eta_{\text{c.m.s.}} < 0.8$, and 5.1% for $0.8 < \eta_{\text{c.m.s.}} < 1.3$.

The systematic uncertainties on the p_T spectrum are summarized in Table I for $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$. The total uncertainties exhibit a weak p_T and $\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}$ dependence. The total systematic uncertainties range between 5.2% and 5.5% for $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$ and reach between 5.6% and 7.1% for $0.8 < \eta_{\text{c.m.s.}} < 1.3$.

In order to quantify nuclear effects in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions, a comparison to a reference p_T spectrum in pp collisions is needed. In the absence of a measurement at $\sqrt{s} = 5.02$ TeV, the reference spectrum is obtained by interpolating or scaling data measured at $\sqrt{s} = 2.76$ and 7 TeV. For $p_T < 5$ GeV/ c , the measured invariant cross section for charged-particle production in inelastic pp collisions, $d^2\sigma_{\text{ch}}^{pp}/d\eta dp_T$, is interpolated bin by bin, assuming a power law dependence as a function of \sqrt{s} . For $p_T > 5$ GeV/ c , the measured data at $\sqrt{s} = 7$ TeV is scaled by a factor obtained from next-to-leading-order (NLO) perturbative QCD calculations [15]. For $p_T < 5$ GeV/ c , the largest of the relative systematic uncertainties of the spectrum at 2.76 or 7 TeV is assigned as the

TABLE I. Systematic uncertainties on the p_T differential yields in $p + \text{Pb}$ and pp collisions for $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$. The quoted ranges span the p_T dependence of the uncertainties.

Uncertainty	Value
Event selection	1.0%–2.0%
Track selection	0.9%–2.7%
Tracking efficiency	3.0%
p_T resolution	0%–3.0%
Particle composition	2.2%–3.1%
Monte Carlo generator used for correction	1.0%
Secondary particle rejection	0.4%–1.1%
Material budget	0%–0.5%
Acceptance (conversion to $\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}$)	0%–0.6%
Total for $p + \text{Pb}$, p_T -dependent	5.2%–5.5%
Normalization $p + \text{Pb}$	3.1%
Total for pp , p_T -dependent	7.7%–8.2%
Normalization pp	3.6%
Nuclear overlap $\langle T_{p\text{Pb}} \rangle$	3.6%

systematic uncertainty at the interpolated energy. For $p_T > 5$ GeV/c, the relative difference between the NLO-scaled spectrum for different choices of the renormalization μ_R and factorization μ_F scales ($\mu_R = \mu_F = p_T, p_T/2, 2p_T$) is added to the systematic uncertainties on the spectrum at 7 TeV. In addition, an uncertainty of 2.2% is estimated by comparing the interpolated and the NLO-scaled data. The total systematic uncertainty ranges from 7.7% to 8.2% for $0.5 < p_T < 20$ GeV/c. The NLO-based scaling of the data at $\sqrt{s} = 2.76$ TeV gives a result well within these uncertainties. More details can be found in Ref. [16].

The final pp reference spectrum is the product of the interpolated invariant cross section and the average nuclear overlap $\langle T_{p+Pb} \rangle$, calculated employing the Glauber model [17], which gives $\langle T_{p+Pb} \rangle = \langle N_{\text{coll}} \rangle / \sigma_{NN} = 0.0983 \pm 0.0035 \text{ mb}^{-1}$, with $\langle N_{\text{coll}} \rangle = 6.9 \pm 0.7$ and $\sigma_{NN} = 70 \pm 5$ mb. The uncertainty is obtained by varying the parameters in the Glauber model calculation; see Ref. [11] (the uncertainties on σ_{NN} and $\langle N_{\text{coll}} \rangle$ cancel partially in the calculation of $\langle T_{pPb} \rangle$).

The p_T spectra of charged particles measured in minimum bias (0%–100% centrality, NSD) $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV are shown in Fig. 1 together with the

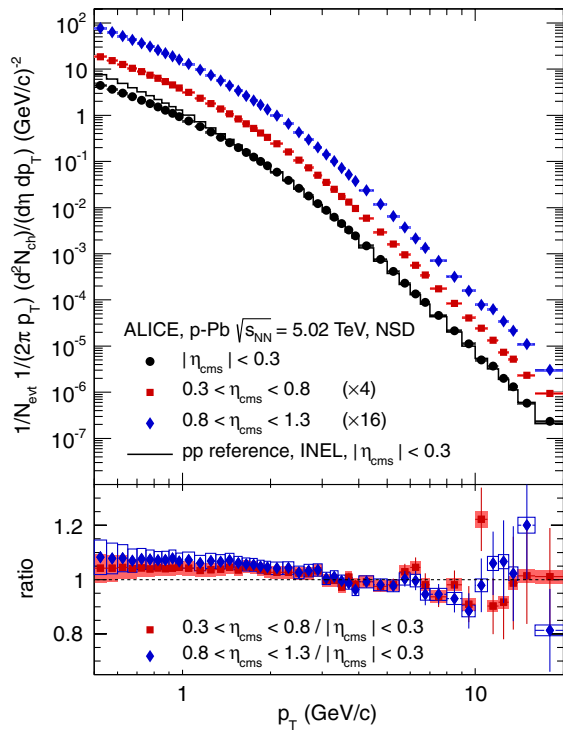


FIG. 1 (color online). Transverse momentum distributions of charged particles in minimum bias (NSD) $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions for different pseudorapidity ranges (upper panel). The spectra are scaled by the factors indicated. The histogram represents the reference spectrum in inelastic (INEL) pp collisions (see text). The lower panel shows the ratio of the spectra at forward pseudorapidity to that at $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$. The vertical bars (boxes) represent the statistical (systematic) errors.

interpolated pp reference spectrum. At high p_T , the p_T distributions in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions are similar to those in pp collisions, as expected in the absence of nuclear effects. There is an indication of a softening of the p_T spectrum when going from central to forward pseudorapidity. This is a small effect, as seen in the ratios of the spectra for forward pseudorapidities to that at $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$, shown in Fig. 1 (lower panel). We note that several contributions to the systematic uncertainties cancel in the ratios, resulting in systematic uncertainties of 2.2%–5.2% (2.2%–5.9%) for the ratio of the spectrum in $0.3 < \eta_{\text{c.m.s.}} < 0.8$ ($0.8 < \eta_{\text{c.m.s.}} < 1.3$) to that in $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$. Calculations with the DPMJET event generator [12], which predict well the measured $dN_{\text{ch}}/d\eta_{\text{lab}}$ [11], overpredict the spectra by up to 22% for $p_T < 0.7$ GeV/c and underpredict them by up to 50% for $p_T > 0.7$ GeV/c.

In order to quantify nuclear effects in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions, the p_T differential yield relative to the pp reference, the nuclear modification factor, is calculated as

$$R_{p\text{Pb}}(p_T) = \frac{d^2N_{\text{ch}}^{p\text{Pb}}/d\eta dp_T}{\langle T_{p\text{Pb}} \rangle d^2\sigma_{\text{ch}}^{pp}/d\eta dp_T}, \quad (1)$$

where $N_{\text{ch}}^{p\text{Pb}}$ is the charged-particle yield in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions. The nuclear modification factor is unity for hard processes which are expected to exhibit binary collision scaling. For the region of several tens of GeV, binary collision scaling was experimentally confirmed in $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions at the LHC by the recent measurements of observables which are not affected by hot QCD matter, direct photon [18], Z^0 [19], and W^\pm [20] production. The present measurement in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions extends this important experimental verification down to the GeV scale and to hadronic observables.

The measurement of the nuclear modification factor $R_{p\text{Pb}}$ for charged particles at $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$ is shown in Fig. 2. The uncertainties of the $p + \text{Pb}$ and pp spectra are added in quadrature, separately for the statistical and systematic uncertainties. The total systematic uncertainty on the normalization, the quadratic sum of the uncertainty on $\langle T_{p+Pb} \rangle$, the normalization of the pp data, and the normalization of the $p + \text{Pb}$ data, amounts to 6.0%.

In Fig. 2, we compare the measurement of the nuclear modification factor in $p + \text{Pb}$ to that in central (0%–5% centrality) and peripheral (70%–80% centrality) $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76$ TeV [8]. $R_{p\text{Pb}}$ is consistent with unity for $p_T \gtrsim 2$ GeV/c, demonstrating that the strong suppression observed in central $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions at the LHC [6–8] is not due to an initial-state effect but rather to a fingerprint of the hot matter created in collisions of heavy ions.

The so-called Cronin effect [21] (see Ref. [22] for a review), namely, a nuclear modification factor above unity at intermediate p_T , was observed at lower energies

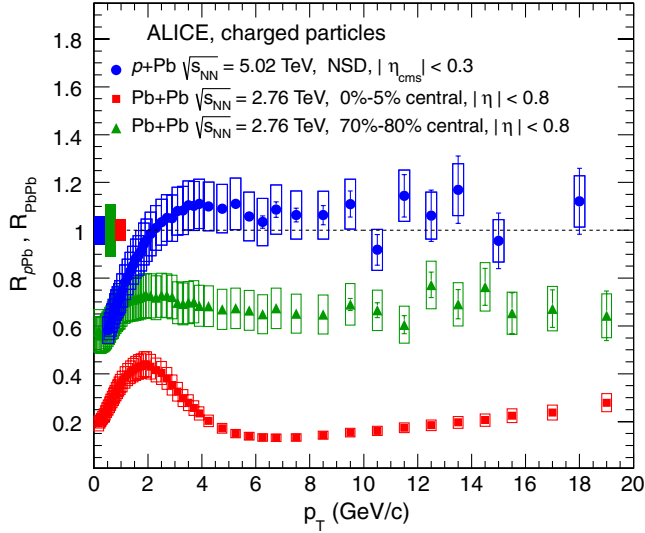


FIG. 2 (color online). The nuclear modification factor of charged particles as a function of transverse momentum in minimum bias (NSD) $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV. The data for $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$ are compared to measurements [8] in central (0%–5% centrality) and peripheral (70%–80%) $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76$ TeV. The statistical errors are represented by vertical bars, the systematic errors by (filled) boxes around data points. The relative systematic uncertainties on the normalization are shown as boxes around unity near $p_T = 0$ for $p + \text{Pb}$ (left box), peripheral $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ (middle box), and central $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ (right box).

in proton-nucleus collisions. In $d + \text{Au}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$ GeV, R_{dAu} reached values of about 1.4 for charged hadrons in the p_T range of 3 to 5 GeV/c [23–26]. The present measurement clearly indicates a smaller magnitude of the Cronin effect at the LHC; the data are even consistent with no enhancement within systematic uncertainties.

Data in $p + \text{Pb}$ are important also to provide constraints to models. For illustration, in Fig. 3, the measurement of R_{pPb} at $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$ is compared to theoretical predictions. Note that the measurement is performed for NSD collisions. With the HIJING [14] and DPMJET [12] event generators, it is estimated that the inclusion of single-diffractive events would lead to a decrease of R_{pPb} by 3%–4%. Several predictions based on the saturation (color glass condensate, CGC) model are available [27–29]. The calculations of Tribedy and Venugopalan [27] are shown for two implementations (running coupling Balitsky-Kovchegov (rcBK) and impact parameter dependent dipole saturation (IP-Sat) models; see Ref. [27] for details). The calculations within IP-Sat are consistent with the data, while those within rcBK slightly underpredict the measurement. The prediction of Albacete *et al.* [28] for the rcBK Monte Carlo model (rcBK-MC) is consistent with the measurement within the rather large uncertainties of the model. The CGC calculations of

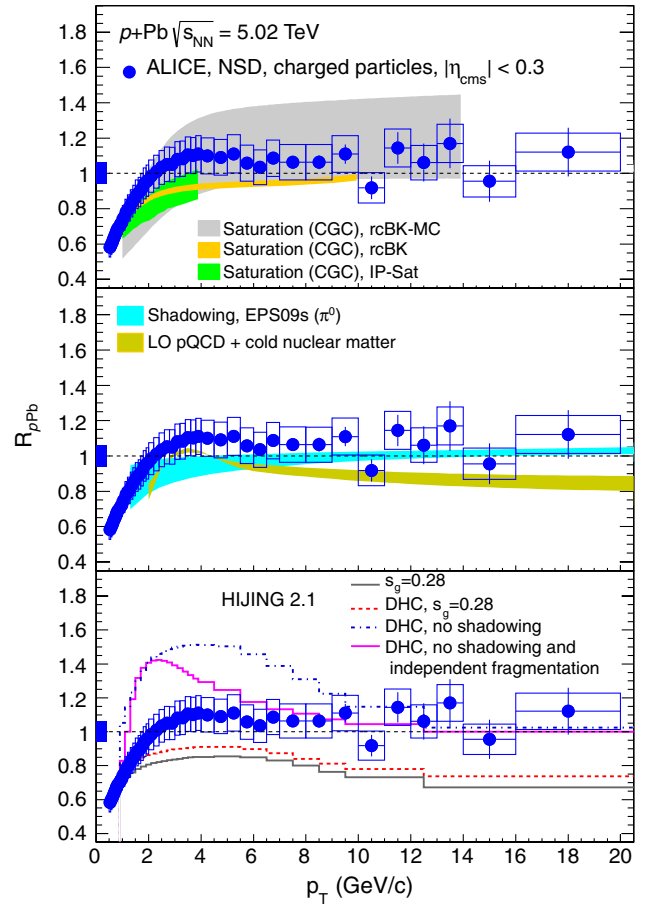


FIG. 3 (color online). Transverse momentum dependence of the nuclear modification factor R_{pPb} of charged particles measured in minimum bias (NSD) $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV. The ALICE data in $|\eta_{\text{c.m.s.}}| < 0.3$ (symbols) are compared to model calculations (bands or lines, see text for details). The vertical bars (boxes) show the statistical (systematic) errors. The relative systematic uncertainty on the normalization is shown as a box around unity near $p_T = 0$.

Rezaeian [29], not included in Fig. 3, are consistent with those of Refs. [27,28]. The shadowing calculations of Helenius *et al.* [30], performed at NLO with the EPS09s parton distribution functions, describe the data well (the calculations are for π^0). The predictions by Kang *et al.* [31], performed within a framework combining leading-order (LO) perturbative QCD (pQCD) and cold nuclear matter effects, show R_{pPb} values below unity for $p_T \gtrsim 6$ GeV/c, which is not supported by the data. The prediction from the HIJING 2.1 model [32] describes, with shadowing, the trend seen in the data, although it seems that, with the present shadowing parameter s_g , the model underpredicts the data. The HIJING model implementation of decoherent hard collisions (DHCs) has a small influence on the results; the case of independent fragmentation is included for this model and improves agreement with data at intermediate p_T . The comparisons

in Fig. 3 clearly illustrate that the data are crucial for the theoretical understanding of cold nuclear matter as probed in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions at the LHC.

In summary, we have reported measurements of the charged-particle p_T spectra and the nuclear modification factor in minimum bias (NSD) $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV. The data, covering $0.5 < p_T < 20$ GeV/ c , show a nuclear modification factor consistent with unity for $p_T \gtrsim 2$ GeV/ c . This measurement indicates that the strong suppression of hadron production at high p_T observed at the LHC in $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions is not due to an initial-state effect but is the fingerprint of jet quenching in hot QCD matter.

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B. Abelev,¹ J. Adam,² D. Adamová,³ A. M. Adare,⁴ M. M. Aggarwal,⁵ G. Aglieri Rinella,⁶ M. Agnello,⁷ A. G. Agocs,⁸ A. Agostinelli,⁹ Z. Ahammed,¹⁰ N. Ahmad,¹¹ A. Ahmad Masoodi,¹¹ S. A. Ahn,¹² S. U. Ahn,^{13,12} M. Ajaz,¹⁴ A. Akindinov,¹⁵ D. Aleksandrov,¹⁶ B. Alessandro,⁷ A. Alici,^{17,18} A. Alkin,¹⁹ E. Almaráz Aviña,²⁰ J. Alme,²¹ T. Alt,²² V. Altini,²³ S. Altinpinar,²⁴ I. Altsybeev,²⁵ C. Andrei,²⁶ A. Andronic,²⁷ V. Anguelov,²⁸ J. Anielski,²⁹ C. Anson,³⁰ T. Antičić,³¹ F. Antinori,³² P. Antonioli,¹⁷ L. Aphecetche,³³ H. Appelshäuser,³⁴ N. Arbor,³⁵ S. Arcelli,⁹ A. Arend,³⁴ N. Armesto,³⁶ R. Arnaldi,⁷ T. Aronsson,⁴ I. C. Arsene,²⁷ M. Arslanodok,³⁴ A. Asryan,²⁵ A. Augustinus,⁶ R. Auerbeck,²⁷ T. C. Awes,³⁷ J. Äystö,³⁸ M. D. Azmi,^{11,39} M. Bach,²² A. Badalà,⁴⁰ Y. W. Baek,^{41,13} R. Bailhache,³⁴ R. Bala,^{42,7} R. Baldini Ferroli,¹⁸ A. Baldisseri,⁴³ F. Baltasar Dos Santos Pedrosa,⁶ J. Bán,⁴⁴ R. C. Baral,⁴⁵ R. Barbera,⁴⁶ F. Barile,²³ G. G. Barnaföldi,⁸ L. S. Barnby,⁴⁷ V. Barret,⁴¹ J. Bartke,⁴⁸ M. Basile,⁹ N. Bastid,⁴¹ S. Basu,¹⁰ B. Bathen,²⁹ G. Batigne,³³ B. Batyunya,⁴⁹ C. Baumann,³⁴ I. G. Bearden,⁵⁰ H. Beck,³⁴ N. K. Behera,⁵¹ I. Belikov,⁵² F. Bellini,⁹ R. Bellwied,⁵³ E. Belmont-Moreno,²⁰ G. Bencedi,⁸ S. Beole,⁵⁴ I. Berceanu,²⁶ A. Bercuci,²⁶ Y. Berdnikov,⁵⁵ D. Berenyi,⁸ A. A. E. Bergognon,³³ D. Berzano,^{54,7} L. Betev,⁶ A. Bhasin,⁴² A. K. Bhati,⁵ J. Bhom,⁵⁶ L. Bianchi,⁵⁴ N. Bianchi,⁵⁷ J. Bielčik,² J. Bielčíková,³ A. Bilandzic,⁵⁰ S. Bjelogrić,⁵⁸ F. Blanco,⁵³ F. Blanco,⁵⁹ D. Blau,¹⁶ C. Blume,³⁴ M. Boccioni,⁶ S. Böttger,⁶⁰ A. Bogdanov,⁶¹ H. Bøggild,⁵⁰ M. Bogolyubsky,⁶² L. Boldizsár,⁸ M. Bombara,⁶³ J. Book,³⁴ H. Borel,⁴³ A. Borissov,⁶⁴ F. Bossú,³⁹ M. Botje,⁶⁵ E. Botta,⁵⁴ E. Braidot,⁶⁶ P. Braun-Munzinger,²⁷ M. Bregant,³³ T. Breitner,⁶⁰ T. A. Browning,⁶⁷ M. Broz,⁶⁸ R. Brun,⁶ E. Bruna,^{54,7} G. E. Bruno,²³ D. Budnikov,⁶⁹ H. Buesching,³⁴ S. Bufalino,^{54,7} P. Buncic,⁶ O. Busch,²⁸ Z. Buthelezi,³⁹ D. Caballero Orduna,⁴ D. Caffarri,^{70,32} X. Cai,⁷¹ H. Caines,⁴ E. Calvo Villar,⁷² P. Camerini,⁷³ V. Canoa Roman,⁷⁴ G. Cara Romeo,¹⁷ W. Carena,⁶ F. Carena,⁶ N. Carlin Filho,⁷⁵ F. Carminati,⁶ A. Casanova Díaz,⁵⁷ J. Castillo Castellanos,⁴³ J. F. Castillo Hernandez,²⁷ E. A. R. Casula,⁷⁶ V. Catanesu,²⁶ C. Cavicchioli,⁶ C. Ceballos Sanchez,⁷⁷ J. Cepila,² P. Cerello,⁷ B. Chang,^{38,78} S. Chapeland,⁶ J. L. Charvet,⁴³ S. Chattopadhyay,⁷⁹ S. Chattopadhyay,¹⁰ I. Chawla,⁵ M. Cherney,⁸⁰ C. Cheshkov,^{6,81} B. Cheynis,⁸¹ V. Chibante Barroso,⁶ D. D. Chinellato,⁵³ P. Chochula,⁶ M. Chojnacki,^{50,58} S. Choudhury,¹⁰ P. Christakoglou,⁶⁵ C. H. Christensen,⁵⁰ P. Christiansen,⁸² T. Chujo,⁵⁶ S. U. Chung,⁸³ C. Cicalo,⁸⁴ L. Cifarelli,^{9,6,18} F. Cindolo,¹⁷ J. Cleymans,³⁹ F. Coccetti,¹⁸ F. Colamaria,²³ D. Colella,²³ A. Collu,⁷⁶ G. Conesa Balbastre,³⁵ Z. Conesa del Valle,⁶ M. E. Connors,⁴ G. Contin,⁷³ J. G. Contreras,⁷⁴ T. M. Cormier,⁶⁴ Y. Corrales Morales,⁵⁴ P. Cortese,⁸⁵ I. Cortés Maldonado,⁸⁶ M. R. Cosentino,⁶⁶ F. Costa,⁶ M. E. Cotallo,⁵⁹ E. Crescio,⁷⁴ P. Crochet,⁴¹ E. Cruz Alaniz,²⁰ E. Cuautele,⁸⁷ L. Cunqueiro,⁵⁷ A. Dainese,^{70,32} H. H. Dalsgaard,⁵⁰ A. Danu,⁸⁸ I. Das,⁸⁹ D. Das,⁷⁹ K. Das,⁷⁹ S. Das,⁹⁰ A. Dash,⁹¹ S. Dash,⁵¹ S. De,¹⁰ G. O. V. de Barros,⁷⁵ A. De Caro,^{92,18} G. de Cataldo,⁹³ J. de Cuveland,²² A. De Falco,⁷⁶ D. De Gruttola,⁹² H. Delagrange,³³ A. Deloff,⁹⁴ N. De Marco,⁷ E. Dénes,⁸ S. De Pasquale,⁹² A. Deppman,⁷⁵ G. D. Erasmo,²³ R. de Rooij,⁵⁸ M. A. Diaz Corchero,⁵⁹ D. Di Bari,²³ T. Dietel,²⁹ C. Di Giglio,²³ S. Di Liberto,⁹⁵ A. Di Mauro,⁶ P. Di Nezza,⁵⁷ R. Divià,⁶ Ø. Djuvsland,²⁴ A. Dobrin,^{64,82} T. Dobrowolski,⁹⁴ B. Dönigus,²⁷ O. Dordic,⁹⁶ O. Driga,³³ A. K. Dubey,¹⁰ A. Dubla,⁵⁸ L. Ducroux,⁸¹ P. Dupieux,⁴¹ A. K. Dutta Majumdar,⁷⁹ M. R. Dutta Majumdar,¹⁰ D. Elia,⁹³ D. Emschermann,²⁹ H. Engel,⁶⁰ B. Erazmus,^{6,33} H. A. Erdal,²¹ B. Espagnon,⁸⁹ M. Estienne,³³ S. Esumi,⁵⁶ D. Evans,⁴⁷ G. Eyyubova,⁹⁶ D. Fabris,^{70,32} J. Faivre,³⁵ D. Falchieri,⁹ A. Fantoni,⁵⁷ M. Fasel,^{27,28} R. Fearick,³⁹ D. Fehlker,²⁴ L. Feldkamp,²⁹ D. Felea,⁸⁸ A. Feliciello,⁷ B. Fenton-Olsen,⁶⁶ G. Feofilov,²⁵ A. Fernández Téllez,⁸⁶ A. Ferretti,⁵⁴ A. Festanti,⁷⁰ J. Figiel,⁴⁸ M. A. S. Figueredo,⁷⁵ S. Filchagin,⁶⁹ D. Finogeev,⁹⁷ F. M. Fionda,²³ E. M. Fiore,²³ M. Floris,⁶ S. Foertsch,³⁹ P. Foka,²⁷ S. Fokin,¹⁶ E. Fragiaco,⁹⁸ A. Francescon,^{6,70} U. Frankenfeld,²⁷ U. Fuchs,⁶ C. Furget,³⁵ M. Fusco Girard,⁹² J. J. Gaardhøje,⁵⁰ M. Gagliardi,⁵⁴ A. Gago,⁷² M. Gallio,⁵⁴ D. R. Gangadharan,³⁰ P. Ganoti,³⁷ C. Garabatos,²⁷ E. Garcia-Solis,⁹⁹ I. Garishvili,¹ J. Gerhard,²²

M. Germain,³³ C. Geuna,⁴³ M. Gheata,^{88,6} A. Gheata,⁶ P. Ghosh,¹⁰ P. Gianotti,⁵⁷ M. R. Girard,¹⁰⁰ P. Giubellino,⁶ E. Gladysz-Dziadus,⁴⁸ P. Glässel,²⁸ R. Gomez,^{101,74} E. G. Ferreira,³⁶ L. H. González-Trueba,²⁰ P. González-Zamora,⁵⁹ S. Gorbunov,²² A. Goswami,¹⁰² S. Gotovac,¹⁰³ L. K. Graczykowski,¹⁰⁰ R. Grajcarek,²⁸ A. Grelli,⁵⁸ C. Grigoras,⁶ A. Grigoras,⁶ V. Grigoriev,⁶¹ S. Grigoryan,⁴⁹ A. Grigoryan,¹⁰⁴ B. Grinyov,¹⁹ N. Grion,⁹⁸ P. Gros,⁸² J. F. Grosse-Oetringhaus,⁶ J.-Y. Grossiord,⁸¹ R. Grosso,⁶ F. Guber,⁹⁷ R. Guernane,³⁵ C. Guerra Gutierrez,⁷² B. Guerzoni,⁹ M. Guilbaud,⁸¹ K. Gulbrandsen,⁵⁰ H. Gulkanyan,¹⁰⁴ T. Gunji,¹⁰⁵ A. Gupta,⁴² R. Gupta,⁴² Ø. Haaland,²⁴ C. Hadjidakis,⁸⁹ M. Haiduc,⁸⁸ H. Hamagaki,¹⁰⁵ G. Hamar,⁸ B. H. Han,¹⁰⁶ L. D. Hanratty,⁴⁷ A. Hansen,⁵⁰ Z. Harmanová-Tóthová,⁶³ J. W. Harris,⁴ M. Hartig,³⁴ A. Harton,⁹⁹ D. Hasegan,⁸⁸ D. Hatzifotiadou,¹⁷ S. Hayashi,¹⁰⁵ A. Hayrapetyan,^{6,104} S. T. Heckel,³⁴ M. Heide,²⁹ H. Helstrup,²¹ A. Hergehelegiu,²⁶ G. Herrera Corral,⁷⁴ N. Herrmann,²⁸ B. A. Hess,¹⁰⁷ K. F. Hetland,²¹ B. Hicks,⁴ B. Hippolyte,⁵² Y. Hori,¹⁰⁵ P. Hristov,⁶ I. Hřivnáčová,⁸⁹ M. Huang,²⁴ T. J. Humanic,³⁰ D. S. Hwang,¹⁰⁶ R. Ichou,⁴¹ R. Ilkaev,⁶⁹ I. Ilkiv,⁹⁴ M. Inaba,⁵⁶ E. Incani,⁷⁶ G. M. Innocenti,⁵⁴ P. G. Innocenti,⁶ M. Ippolitov,¹⁶ M. Irfan,¹¹ C. Ivan,²⁷ A. Ivanov,²⁵ M. Ivanov,²⁷ V. Ivanov,⁵⁵ O. Ivanytskyi,¹⁹ A. Jachoňkowski,⁴⁶ P. M. Jacobs,⁶⁶ H. J. Jang,¹² M. A. Janik,¹⁰⁰ R. Janik,⁶⁸ P. H. S. Y. Jayarathna,⁵³ S. Jena,⁵¹ D. M. Jha,⁶⁴ R. T. Jimenez Bustamante,⁸⁷ P. G. Jones,⁴⁷ H. Jung,¹³ A. Jusko,⁴⁷ A. B. Kaidalov,¹⁵ S. Kalcher,²² P. Kaliňák,⁴⁴ T. Kalliokoski,³⁸ A. Kalweit,^{108,6} J. H. Kang,⁷⁸ V. Kaplin,⁶¹ A. Karasu Uysal,^{6,109,110} O. Karavichev,⁹⁷ T. Karavicheva,⁹⁷ E. Karpechev,⁹⁷ A. Kazantsev,¹⁶ U. Kebschull,⁶⁰ R. Keidel,¹¹¹ S. A. Khan,¹⁰ P. Khan,⁷⁹ K. H. Khan,¹⁴ M. M. Khan,¹¹ A. Khanzadeev,⁵⁵ Y. Kharlov,⁶² B. Kileng,²¹ D. J. Kim,³⁸ T. Kim,⁷⁸ D. W. Kim,^{13,12} J. H. Kim,¹⁰⁶ J. S. Kim,¹³ M. Kim,¹³ M. Kim,⁷⁸ S. Kim,¹⁰⁶ B. Kim,⁷⁸ S. Kirsch,²² I. Kisel,²² S. Kiselev,¹⁵ A. Kisiel,¹⁰⁰ J. L. Klay,¹¹² J. Klein,²⁸ C. Klein-Bösing,²⁹ M. Kliemant,³⁴ A. Kluge,⁶ M. L. Knichel,²⁷ A. G. Knospe,¹¹³ M. K. Köhler,²⁷ T. Kollegger,²² A. Kolojvari,²⁵ V. Kondratiev,²⁵ N. Kondratyeva,⁶¹ A. Konevskikh,⁹⁷ R. Kour,⁴⁷ V. Kovalenko,²⁵ M. Kowalski,⁴⁸ S. Kox,³⁵ G. Koyithatta Meethalevedu,⁵¹ J. Kral,³⁸ I. Králik,⁴⁴ F. Kramer,³⁴ A. Kravčáková,⁶³ T. Krawutschke,^{28,114} M. Krelina,² M. Kretz,²² M. Krivda,^{47,44} F. Krizek,³⁸ M. Krus,² E. Kryshen,⁵⁵ M. Krzewicki,²⁷ Y. Kucheriaev,¹⁶ T. Kugathanan,⁶ C. Kuhn,⁵² P. G. Kuijer,⁶⁵ I. Kulakov,³⁴ J. Kumar,⁵¹ P. Kurashvili,⁹⁴ A. Kurepin,⁹⁷ A. B. Kurepin,⁹⁷ A. Kuryakin,⁶⁹ S. Kushpil,³ V. Kushpil,³ H. Kvaerno,⁹⁶ M. J. Kweon,²⁸ Y. Kwon,⁷⁸ P. Ladrón de Guevara,⁸⁷ I. Lakomov,⁸⁹ R. Langoy,²⁴ S. L. La Pointe,⁵⁸ C. Lara,⁶⁰ A. Lardeux,³³ P. La Rocca,⁴⁶ R. Lea,⁷³ M. Lechman,⁶ S. C. Lee,¹³ G. R. Lee,⁴⁷ K. S. Lee,¹³ I. Legrand,⁶ J. Lehnert,³⁴ M. Lenhardt,²⁷ V. Lenti,⁹³ H. León,²⁰ M. Leoncino,⁷ I. León Monzón,¹⁰¹ H. León Vargas,³⁴ P. Lévai,⁸ J. Lien,²⁴ R. Lietava,⁴⁷ S. Lindal,⁹⁶ V. Lindenstruth,²² C. Lippmann,^{27,6} M. A. Lisa,³⁰ H. M. Ljunggren,⁸² P. I. Loenne,²⁴ V. R. Loggins,⁶⁴ V. Loginov,⁶¹ D. Lohner,²⁸ C. Loizides,⁶⁶ K. K. Loo,³⁸ X. Lopez,⁴¹ E. López Torres,⁷⁷ G. Løvhøiden,⁹⁶ X.-G. Lu,²⁸ P. Luettig,³⁴ M. Lunardon,⁷⁰ J. Luo,⁷¹ G. Luparello,⁵⁸ C. Luzzi,⁶ K. Ma,⁷¹ R. Ma,⁴ D. M. Madagodahettige-Don,⁵³ A. Maevskaya,⁹⁷ M. Mager,^{108,6} D. P. Mahapatra,⁴⁵ A. Maire,²⁸ M. Malaev,⁵⁵ I. Maldonado Cervantes,⁸⁷ L. Malinina,^{49,115} D. Mal'Kevich,¹⁵ P. Malzacher,²⁷ A. Mamonov,⁶⁹ L. Manceau,⁷ L. Mangotra,⁴² V. Manko,¹⁶ F. Manso,⁴¹ V. Manzari,⁹³ Y. Mao,⁷¹ M. Marchisone,^{41,54} J. Mares,¹¹⁶ G. V. Margagliotti,^{73,98} A. Margotti,¹⁷ A. Marín,²⁷ C. Markert,¹¹³ M. Marquard,³⁴ I. Martashvili,¹¹⁷ N. A. Martin,²⁷ P. Martinengo,⁶ M. I. Martínez,⁸⁶ A. Martínez Davalos,²⁰ G. Martínez García,³³ Y. Martynov,¹⁹ A. Mas,³³ S. Masciocchi,²⁷ M. Masera,⁵⁴ A. Masoni,⁸⁴ L. Massacrier,³³ A. Mastroserio,²³ Z. L. Matthews,⁴⁷ A. Matyja,^{48,33} C. Mayer,⁴⁸ J. Mazer,¹¹⁷ M. A. Mazzoni,⁹⁵ F. Meddi,¹¹⁸ A. Menchaca-Rocha,²⁰ J. Mercado Pérez,²⁸ M. Meres,⁶⁸ Y. Miake,⁵⁶ L. Milano,⁵⁴ J. Milosevic,^{96,115} A. Mischke,⁵⁸ A. N. Mishra,^{102,119} D. Miśkowiec,^{27,6} C. Mitu,⁸⁸ S. Mizuno,⁵⁶ J. Mlynarz,⁶⁴ B. Mohanty,^{10,120} L. Molnar,^{8,6,52} L. Montaña Zetina,⁷⁴ M. Monteno,⁷ E. Montes,⁵⁹ T. Moon,⁷⁸ M. Morando,⁷⁰ D. A. Moreira De Godoy,⁷⁵ S. Moretto,⁷⁰ A. Morreale,³⁸ A. Morsch,⁶ V. Muccifora,⁵⁷ E. Mudnic,¹⁰³ S. Muhuri,¹⁰ M. Mukherjee,¹⁰ H. Müller,⁶ M. G. Munhoz,⁷⁵ L. Musa,⁶ A. Musso,⁷ B. K. Nandi,⁵¹ R. Nania,¹⁷ E. Nappi,⁹³ C. Nattrass,¹¹⁷ S. Navin,⁴⁷ T. K. Nayak,¹⁰ S. Nazarenko,⁶⁹ A. Nedosekin,¹⁵ M. Nicassio,^{23,27} M. Niculescu,^{88,6} B. S. Nielsen,⁵⁰ T. Niida,⁵⁶ S. Nikolaev,¹⁶ V. Nikolic,³¹ S. Nikulin,¹⁶ V. Nikulin,⁵⁵ B. S. Nilsen,⁸⁰ M. S. Nilsson,⁹⁶ F. Noferini,^{17,18} P. Nomokonov,⁴⁹ G. Nooren,⁵⁸ N. Novitzky,³⁸ A. Nyanin,¹⁶ A. Nyatha,⁵¹ C. Nygaard,⁵⁰ J. Nystrand,²⁴ A. Ochirov,²⁵ H. Oeschler,^{108,6} S. Oh,⁴ S. K. Oh,¹³ J. Oleniacz,¹⁰⁰ A. C. Oliveira Da Silva,⁷⁵ C. Oppedisano,⁷ A. Ortiz Velasquez,^{82,87} A. Oskarsson,⁸² P. Ostrowski,¹⁰⁰ J. Otwinowski,²⁷ K. Oyama,²⁸ K. Ozawa,¹⁰⁵ Y. Pachmayer,²⁸ M. Pacher,² F. Padilla,⁵⁴ P. Pagano,⁹² G. Paic,⁸⁷ F. Painke,²² C. Pajares,³⁶ S. K. Pal,¹⁰ A. Palaha,⁴⁷ A. Palmeri,⁴⁰ V. Papikyan,¹⁰⁴ G. S. Pappalardo,⁴⁰ W. J. Park,²⁷ A. Passfeld,²⁹ B. Pastirčák,⁴⁴ D. I. Patalakha,⁶² V. Paticchio,⁹³ B. Paul,⁷⁹ A. Pavlinov,⁶⁴ T. Pawlak,¹⁰⁰ T. Peitzmann,⁵⁸ H. Pereira Da Costa,⁴³ E. Pereira De Oliveira Filho,⁷⁵ D. Peresunko,¹⁶ C. E. Pérez Lara,⁶⁵ D. Perini,⁶ D. Perrino,²³ W. Peryt,¹⁰⁰ A. Pesci,¹⁷ V. Peskov,^{6,87} Y. Pestov,¹²¹ V. Petráček,² M. Petran,² M. Petris,²⁶ P. Petrov,⁴⁷ M. Petrovici,²⁶

C. Petta,⁴⁶ S. Piano,⁹⁸ A. Piccotti,⁷ M. Pikna,⁶⁸ P. Pillot,³³ O. Pinazza,⁶ L. Pinsky,⁵³ N. Pitz,³⁴ D. B. Piyarathna,⁵³ M. Planinic,³¹ M. Płoskoń,⁶⁶ J. Pluta,¹⁰⁰ T. Pocheptsov,⁴⁹ S. Pochybova,⁸ P. L. M. Podesta-Lerma,¹⁰¹ M. G. Poghosyan,⁶ K. Polák,¹¹⁶ B. Polichtchouk,⁶² A. Pop,²⁶ S. Porteboeuf-Houssais,⁴¹ V. Pospíšil,² B. Potukuchi,⁴² S. K. Prasad,⁶⁴ R. Preghenella,^{17,18} F. Prino,⁷ C. A. Pruneau,⁶⁴ I. Pshenichnov,⁹⁷ G. Puddu,⁷⁶ V. Punin,⁶⁹ M. Putiš,⁶³ J. Putschke,⁶⁴ E. Quercigh,⁶ H. Qvigstad,⁹⁶ A. Rachevski,⁹⁸ A. Rademakers,⁶ T. S. Rähä,³⁸ J. Rak,³⁸ A. Rakotozafindrabe,⁴³ L. Ramello,⁸⁵ A. Ramírez Reyes,⁷⁴ R. Raniwala,¹⁰² S. Raniwala,¹⁰² S. S. Räsänen,³⁸ B. T. Rascanu,³⁴ D. Rathee,⁵ K. F. Read,¹¹⁷ J. S. Real,³⁵ K. Redlich,^{94,122} R. J. Reed,⁴ A. Rehman,²⁴ P. Reichelt,³⁴ M. Reicher,⁵⁸ R. Renfordt,³⁴ A. R. Reolon,⁵⁷ A. Reshetin,⁹⁷ F. Rettig,²² J.-P. Revol,⁶ K. Reygers,²⁸ L. Riccati,⁷ R. A. Ricci,¹²³ T. Richert,⁸² M. Richter,⁹⁶ P. Riedler,⁶ W. Riegler,⁶ F. Riggi,^{46,40} M. Rodríguez Cahuantzi,⁸⁶ A. Rodríguez Manso,⁶⁵ K. Røed,^{24,96} D. Rohr,²² D. Röhrich,²⁴ R. Romita,^{27,124} F. Ronchetti,⁵⁷ P. Rosnet,⁴¹ S. Rossegger,⁶ A. Rossi,^{6,70} P. Roy,⁷⁹ C. Roy,⁵² A. J. Rubio Montero,⁵⁹ R. Rui,⁷³ R. Russo,⁵⁴ E. Ryabinkin,¹⁶ A. Rybicki,⁴⁸ S. Sadovsky,⁶² K. Šafařík,⁶ R. Sahoo,¹¹⁹ P. K. Sahu,⁴⁵ J. Saini,¹⁰ H. Sakaguchi,¹²⁵ S. Sakai,⁶⁶ D. Sakata,⁵⁶ C. A. Salgado,³⁶ J. Salzwedel,³⁰ S. Sambyal,⁴² V. Samsonov,⁵⁵ X. Sanchez Castro,⁵² L. Šándor,⁴⁴ A. Sandoval,²⁰ M. Sano,⁵⁶ G. Santagati,⁴⁶ R. Santoro,^{6,18} J. Sarkamo,³⁸ E. Scapparone,¹⁷ F. Scarlassara,⁷⁰ R. P. Scharenberg,⁶⁷ C. Schiaua,²⁶ R. Schicker,²⁸ C. Schmidt,²⁷ H. R. Schmidt,¹⁰⁷ S. Schreiner,⁶ S. Schuchmann,³⁴ J. Schukraft,⁶ T. Schuster,⁴ Y. Schutz,^{6,33} K. Schwarz,²⁷ K. Schweda,²⁷ G. Scioli,⁹ E. Scomparin,⁷ R. Scott,¹¹⁷ P. A. Scott,⁴⁷ G. Segato,⁷⁰ I. Selyuzhenkov,²⁷ S. Senyukov,⁵² J. Seo,⁸³ S. Serci,⁷⁶ E. Serradilla,^{59,20} A. Sevcenco,⁸⁸ A. Shabetai,³³ G. Shabratova,⁴⁹ R. Shahoyan,⁶ N. Sharma,^{5,117} S. Sharma,⁴² S. Rohni,⁴² K. Shigaki,¹²⁵ K. Shtejer,⁷⁷ Y. Sibiriyak,¹⁶ M. Siciliano,⁵⁴ E. Sickling,²⁹ S. Siddhanta,⁸⁴ T. Siemiarczuk,⁹⁴ D. Silvermyr,³⁷ C. Silvestre,³⁵ G. Simatovic,^{87,31} G. Simonetti,⁶ R. Singaraju,¹⁰ R. Singh,⁴² S. Singha,^{10,120} V. Singhal,¹⁰ T. Sinha,⁷⁹ B. C. Sinha,¹⁰ B. Sitar,⁶⁸ M. Sitta,⁸⁵ T. B. Skaali,⁹⁶ K. Skjerdal,²⁴ R. Smakal,² N. Smirnov,⁴ R. J. M. Snellings,⁵⁸ C. Sjøgaard,^{50,82} R. Soltz,¹ H. Son,¹⁰⁶ M. Song,⁷⁸ J. Song,⁸³ C. Soos,⁶ F. Soramel,⁷⁰ I. Sputowska,⁴⁸ M. Spyropoulou-Stassinaki,¹²⁶ B. K. Srivastava,⁶⁷ J. Stachel,²⁸ I. Stan,⁸⁸ I. Stan,⁸⁸ G. Stefanek,⁹⁴ M. Steinpreis,³⁰ E. Stenlund,⁸² G. Steyn,³⁹ J. H. Stiller,²⁸ D. Stocco,³³ M. Stolpovskiy,⁶² P. Strmen,⁶⁸ A. A. P. Suaide,⁷⁵ M. A. Subieta Vásquez,⁵⁴ T. Sugitate,¹²⁵ C. Suire,⁸⁹ R. Sultanov,¹⁵ M. Šumbera,³ T. Susa,³¹ T. J. M. Symons,⁶⁶ A. Szanto de Toledo,⁷⁵ I. Szarka,⁶⁸ A. Szczepankiewicz,^{48,6} A. Szostak,²⁴ M. Szymański,¹⁰⁰ J. Takahashi,⁹¹ J. D. Tapia Takaki,⁸⁹ A. Tarantola Peloni,³⁴ A. Tarazona Martinez,⁶ A. Tauro,⁶ G. Tejada Muñoz,⁸⁶ A. Telesca,⁶ C. Terrevoli,²³ J. Thäder,²⁷ D. Thomas,⁵⁸ R. Tieulent,⁸¹ A. R. Timmins,⁵³ D. Tlusty,² A. Toia,^{22,70,32} H. Torii,¹⁰⁵ L. Toscano,⁷ V. Trubnikov,¹⁹ D. Truesdale,³⁰ W. H. Trzaska,³⁸ T. Tsuji,¹⁰⁵ A. Tumkin,⁶⁹ R. Turrisi,³² T. S. Tveter,⁹⁶ J. Ulery,³⁴ K. Ullaland,²⁴ J. Ulrich,^{127,60} A. Uras,⁸¹ J. Urbán,⁶³ G. M. Urciuoli,⁹⁵ G. L. Usai,⁷⁶ M. Vajzer,^{2,3} M. Vala,^{49,44} L. Valencia Palomo,⁸⁹ S. Vallero,²⁸ P. Vande Vyvre,⁶ M. van Leeuwen,⁵⁸ L. Vannucci,¹²³ A. Vargas,⁸⁶ R. Varma,⁵¹ M. Vasileiou,¹²⁶ A. Vasiliev,¹⁶ V. Vechernin,²⁵ M. Veldhoen,⁵⁸ M. Venaruzzo,⁷³ E. Vercellin,⁵⁴ S. Vergara,⁸⁶ R. Vernet,¹²⁷ M. Verweij,⁵⁸ L. Vickovic,¹⁰³ G. Viesti,⁷⁰ Z. Vilakazi,³⁹ O. Villalobos Baillie,⁴⁷ A. Vinogradov,¹⁶ Y. Vinogradov,⁶⁹ L. Vinogradov,²⁵ T. Virgili,⁹² Y. P. Viyogi,¹⁰ A. Vodopyanov,⁴⁹ K. Voloshin,¹⁵ S. Voloshin,⁶⁴ G. Volpe,⁶ B. von Haller,⁶ I. Vorobyev,²⁵ D. Vranic,²⁷ J. Vrláková,⁶³ B. Vulpescu,⁴¹ A. Vyushin,⁶⁹ B. Wagner,²⁴ V. Wagner,² R. Wan,⁷¹ Y. Wang,²⁸ M. Wang,⁷¹ D. Wang,⁷¹ Y. Wang,⁷¹ K. Watanabe,⁵⁶ M. Weber,⁵³ J. P. Wessels,^{6,29} U. Westerhoff,²⁹ J. Wiechula,¹⁰⁷ J. Wikne,⁹⁶ M. Wilde,²⁹ A. Wilk,²⁹ G. Wilk,⁹⁴ M. C. S. Williams,¹⁷ B. Windelband,²⁸ L. Xaplanteris Karampatsos,¹¹³ C. G. Yaldo,⁶⁴ Y. Yamaguchi,¹⁰⁵ S. Yang,²⁴ H. Yang,^{43,58} S. Yasnopolskiy,¹⁶ J. Yi,⁸³ Z. Yin,⁷¹ I.-K. Yoo,⁸³ J. Yoon,⁷⁸ W. Yu,³⁴ X. Yuan,⁷¹ I. Yushmanov,¹⁶ V. Zaccolo,⁵⁰ C. Zach,² C. Zampolli,¹⁷ S. Zaporozhets,⁴⁹ A. Zarochentsev,²⁵ P. Závada,¹¹⁶ N. Zaviyalov,⁶⁹ H. Zbroszczyk,¹⁰⁰ P. Zelnicek,⁶⁰ I. S. Zgura,⁸⁸ M. Zhalov,⁵⁵ H. Zhang,⁷¹ X. Zhang,^{41,71} Y. Zhou,⁵⁸ F. Zhou,⁷¹ D. Zhou,⁷¹ X. Zhu,⁷¹ J. Zhu,⁷¹ H. Zhu,⁷¹ J. Zhu,⁷¹ A. Zichichi,^{9,18} A. Zimmermann,²⁸ G. Zinovjev,¹⁹ Y. Zoccarato,⁸¹ M. Zynovyev,¹⁹ and M. Zyzak³⁴

(ALICE Collaboration)

¹Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, California, USA²Faculty of Nuclear Sciences and Physical Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague, Prague, Czech Republic³Nuclear Physics Institute, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Řež u Prahy, Czech Republic⁴Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA⁵Physics Department, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India⁶European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), Geneva, Switzerland

- ⁷Sezione INFN, Turin, Italy
- ⁸Wigner Research Centre for Physics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary
- ⁹Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università and Sezione INFN, Bologna, Italy
- ¹⁰Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre, Kolkata, India
- ¹¹Department of Physics, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India
- ¹²Korea Institute of Science and Technology Information, Daejeon, South Korea
- ¹³Gangneung-Wonju National University, Gangneung, South Korea
- ¹⁴COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT), Islamabad, Pakistan
- ¹⁵Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Moscow, Russia
- ¹⁶Russian Research Centre Kurchatov Institute, Moscow, Russia
- ¹⁷Sezione INFN, Bologna, Italy
- ¹⁸Centro Fermi-Museo Storico della Fisica e Centro Studi e Ricerche "Enrico Fermi," Rome, Italy
- ¹⁹Bogolyubov Institute for Theoretical Physics, Kiev, Ukraine
- ²⁰Instituto de Física, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City, Mexico
- ²¹Faculty of Engineering, Bergen University College, Bergen, Norway
- ²²Frankfurt Institute for Advanced Studies, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany
- ²³Dipartimento Interateneo di Fisica M. Merlin" and Sezione INFN, Bari, Italy
- ²⁴Department of Physics and Technology, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway
- ²⁵V. Fock Institute for Physics, St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia
- ²⁶National Institute for Physics and Nuclear Engineering, Bucharest, Romania
- ²⁷Research Division and ExtreMe Matter Institute EMMI, GSI Helmholtzzentrum für Schwerionenforschung, Darmstadt, Germany
- ²⁸Physikalisches Institut, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany
- ²⁹Institut für Kernphysik, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Münster, Germany
- ³⁰Department of Physics, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, USA
- ³¹Rudjer Bošković Institute, Zagreb, Croatia
- ³²Sezione INFN, Padova, Italy
- ³³SUBATECH, Ecole des Mines de Nantes, Université de Nantes, CNRS-IN2P3, Nantes, France
- ³⁴Institut für Kernphysik, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany
- ³⁵Laboratoire de Physique Subatomique et de Cosmologie (LPSC), Université Joseph Fourier, CNRS-IN2P3, Institut Polytechnique de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
- ³⁶Departamento de Física de Partículas and IGFAE, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain
- ³⁷Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, USA
- ³⁸Helsinki Institute of Physics (HIP) and University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland
- ³⁹Physics Department, University of Cape Town and iThemba LABS, National Research Foundation, Somerset West, South Africa
- ⁴⁰Sezione INFN, Catania, Italy
- ⁴¹Laboratoire de Physique Corpusculaire (LPC), Clermont Université, Université Blaise Pascal, CNRS-IN2P3, Clermont-Ferrand, France
- ⁴²Physics Department, University of Jammu, Jammu, India
- ⁴³Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique, IRFU, Saclay, France
- ⁴⁴Institute of Experimental Physics, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Košice, Slovakia
- ⁴⁵Institute of Physics, Bhubaneswar, India
- ⁴⁶Dipartimento di Fisica e Astronomia dell'Università and Sezione INFN, Catania, Italy
- ⁴⁷School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom
- ⁴⁸The Henryk Niewodniczanski Institute of Nuclear Physics, Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow, Poland
- ⁴⁹Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR), Dubna, Russia
- ⁵⁰Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark
- ⁵¹Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT), Mumbai, India
- ⁵²Institut Pluridisciplinaire Hubert Curien (IPHC), Université de Strasbourg, CNRS-IN2P3, Strasbourg, France
- ⁵³University of Houston, Houston, Texas, USA
- ⁵⁴Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università and Sezione INFN, Turin, Italy
- ⁵⁵Petersburg Nuclear Physics Institute, Gatchina, Russia
- ⁵⁶University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan
- ⁵⁷Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, INFN, Frascati, Italy
- ⁵⁸Nikhef, National Institute for Subatomic Physics and Institute for Subatomic Physics of Utrecht University, Utrecht, Netherlands
- ⁵⁹Centro de Investigaciones Energéticas Medioambientales y Tecnológicas (CIEMAT), Madrid, Spain
- ⁶⁰Institut für Informatik, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany
- ⁶¹Moscow Engineering Physics Institute, Moscow, Russia
- ⁶²Institute for High Energy Physics, Protvino, Russia

- ⁶³Faculty of Science, P.J. Šafárik University, Košice, Slovakia
⁶⁴Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, USA
⁶⁵Nikhef, National Institute for Subatomic Physics, Amsterdam, Netherlands
⁶⁶Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley, California, USA
⁶⁷Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, USA
⁶⁸Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia
⁶⁹Russian Federal Nuclear Center (VNIIEF), Sarov, Russia
⁷⁰Dipartimento di Fisica e Astronomia dell'Università and Sezione INFN, Padova, Italy
⁷¹Central China Normal University, Wuhan, China
⁷²Sección Física, Departamento de Ciencias, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Peru
⁷³Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università and Sezione INFN, Trieste, Italy
⁷⁴Centro de Investigación y de Estudios Avanzados (CINVESTAV), Mexico City and Mérida, Mexico
⁷⁵Universidade de São Paulo (USP), São Paulo, Brazil
⁷⁶Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università and Sezione INFN, Cagliari, Italy
⁷⁷Centro de Aplicaciones Tecnológicas y Desarrollo Nuclear (CEADEN), Havana, Cuba
⁷⁸Yonsei University, Seoul, South Korea
⁷⁹Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata, India
⁸⁰Physics Department, Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, USA
⁸¹Université de Lyon, Université Lyon 1, CNRS/IN2P3, IPN-Lyon, Villeurbanne, France
⁸²Division of Experimental High Energy Physics, University of Lund, Lund, Sweden
⁸³Pusan National University, Pusan, South Korea
⁸⁴Sezione INFN, Cagliari, Italy
⁸⁵Dipartimento di Scienze e Innovazione Tecnologica dell'Università del Piemonte Orientale and Gruppo Collegato INFN, Alessandria, Italy
⁸⁶Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Puebla, Mexico
⁸⁷Instituto de Ciencias Nucleares, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City, Mexico
⁸⁸Institute of Space Sciences (ISS), Bucharest, Romania
⁸⁹Institut de Physique Nucléaire d'Orsay (IPNO), Université Paris-Sud, CNRS-IN2P3, Orsay, France
⁹⁰Department of Physics and Centre for Astroparticle Physics and Space Science (CAPSS), Bose Institute, Kolkata, India
⁹¹Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Campinas, Brazil
⁹²Dipartimento di Fisica E.R. Caianiello" dell'Università and Gruppo Collegato INFN, Salerno, Italy
⁹³Sezione INFN, Bari, Italy
⁹⁴National Centre for Nuclear Studies, Warsaw, Poland
⁹⁵Sezione INFN, Rome, Italy
⁹⁶Department of Physics, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway
⁹⁷Institute for Nuclear Research, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia
⁹⁸Sezione INFN, Trieste, Italy
⁹⁹Chicago State University, Chicago, Illinois, USA
¹⁰⁰Warsaw University of Technology, Warsaw, Poland
¹⁰¹Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa, Culiacán, Mexico
¹⁰²Physics Department, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India
¹⁰³Technical University of Split FESB, Split, Croatia
¹⁰⁴A. I. Alikhanyan National Science Laboratory (Yerevan Physics Institute) Foundation, Yerevan, Armenia
¹⁰⁵University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan
¹⁰⁶Department of Physics, Sejong University, Seoul, South Korea
¹⁰⁷Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany
¹⁰⁸Institut für Kernphysik, Technische Universität Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany
¹⁰⁹Yıldız Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey
¹¹⁰Karatay University, Konya, Turkey
¹¹¹Zentrum für Technologietransfer und Telekommunikation (ZTT), Fachhochschule Worms, Worms, Germany
¹¹²California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California, USA
¹¹³The University of Texas at Austin, Physics Department, Austin, Texas, USA
¹¹⁴Fachhochschule Köln, Köln, Germany
¹¹⁵Institute of Physics, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague, Czech Republic
¹¹⁶University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, USA
¹¹⁷Dipartimento di Fisica dell'Università "La Sapienza" and Sezione INFN, Rome, Italy
¹¹⁸Indian Institute of Technology Indore (IITI), Indore, India
¹¹⁹National Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhubaneswar, India
¹²⁰Budker Institute for Nuclear Physics, Novosibirsk, Russia
¹²¹Institut of Theoretical Physics, University of Wrocław

¹²²*Laboratori Nazionali di Legnaro, INFN, Legnaro, Italy*

¹²³*Nuclear Physics Group, STFC Daresbury Laboratory, Daresbury, United Kingdom*

¹²⁴*Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, Japan*

¹²⁵*Physics Department, University of Athens, Athens, Greece*

¹²⁶*Kirchhoff-Institut für Physik, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany*

¹²⁷*Centre de Calcul de l'IN2P3, Villeurbanne, France*