

# Pion polarizabilities measurement at COMPASS

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**Abstract.** The electromagnetic structure of pions is probed in  $\pi^- + (A, Z) \rightarrow \pi^- + (A, Z) + \gamma$  Compton scattering in inverse kinematics (Primakoff reaction) and described by the electric ( $\overline{\alpha}_\pi$ ) and the magnetic ( $\overline{\beta}_\pi$ ) polarizabilities that depend on the rigidity of pion's internal structure as a composite particle. Values for pion polarizabilities can be extracted from the comparison of the differential cross section for scattering of pointlike pions with the measured cross section. The pion polarizability measurement was performed with a  $\pi^-$  beam of 190 GeV. The high beam intensity, the good spectrometer resolution, the high rate capability, the high acceptance and the possibility to use pion and muon beams, unique to the COMPASS experiment, provide the tools to measure precisely the pion polarizabilities in the Primakoff reaction.

## 1. Introduction

Pion polarizabilities characterize the pion interacting as a complex  $q\bar{q}$  system with external electromagnetic fields. They are fundamental parameters of pion physics and the comparison of theoretically predicted and directly measured values provides a stringent test for various theoretical models. Among different models chiral perturbation theory ( $\chi PT$ ) is one of the most successful tools in describing low energy hadron properties and provides predictions for these two parameters [1]:  $\overline{\alpha}_\pi = 2.93 \pm 0.5 \times 10^{-4} fm^3$ ,  $\overline{\beta}_\pi = -2.77 \pm 0.5 \times 10^{-4} fm^3$ . The predictions of other theoretical models, like dispersion sum rules, QCD sum rule, quark confinement model, lie in the range  $(2 - 8) \times 10^{-4} fm^3$  for the absolute values of  $\overline{\alpha}_\pi$  and  $\overline{\beta}_\pi$  (See [2],[3]). Several attempts were already done using different approaches to measure these quantities (See [4],[5],[10],[6],[7],[8],[11]). The results obtained are affected by large uncertainties and there are large discrepancies between them and the  $\chi PT$  prediction. The new measurement performed with the COMPASS spectrometer will contribute to clarify the situation.

## 2. Primakoff reaction.

The Primakoff reaction  $\pi^- + (A, Z) \rightarrow \pi^- + (A, Z) + \gamma$  can be treated as Compton scattering of a virtual photon, provided by the nucleus, on the pion. The momentum transferred to the nucleus in a Primakoff reaction is very small ( $Q \ll m_\pi$ ).

In the anti-laboratory system the differential cross section is described by the formula:

$$\frac{d^3\sigma}{dQd\omega_1 d(\cos\theta)} = \frac{2\alpha^3 Z^2}{m_\pi^2 \omega_1} \frac{Q^2 - Q_0^2}{Q^4} |F_A(t)|^2 \cdot \left( F_{\pi\gamma}^{Pt} + \frac{m_\pi \omega_1^2}{\alpha} \cdot \frac{\overline{\alpha}_\pi (1 + \cos^2\theta) + 2\overline{\beta}_\pi \cos\theta}{(1 + \frac{\omega_1}{m_\pi} (1 - \cos\theta))^3} \right) \quad (1)$$

where  $Q_0^2 = (\frac{m_\pi \omega_1}{p_{beam}})^2$ ,  $m_\pi$  is the pion mass,  $\omega_1$  the energy of the virtual photon,  $\theta$  the angle between the real photon and the virtual photon directions and  $F_A(t)$  the electromagnetic form factor of the nucleus ( $F_A(t) \approx 1$  for  $Q \ll m_\pi/c$ ).

Here,  $F_{\pi\gamma}^{Pt}$  [12] describes the differential Compton cross section for the scattering of photons on a point-like spin-0 particles. The main characteristic of the cross section (Eq. (1)) is that it depends on  $(\overline{\alpha}_\pi + \overline{\beta}_\pi)$  at forward angles and on  $(\overline{\alpha}_\pi - \overline{\beta}_\pi)$  at backward angles.

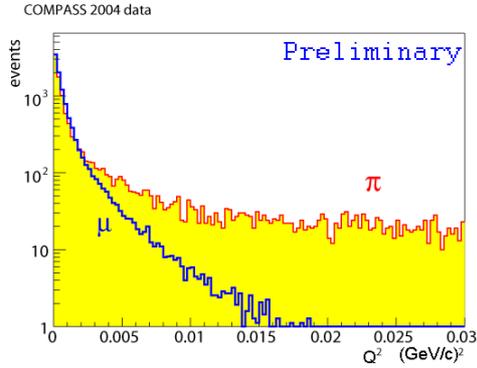
### 3. Primakoff reaction studies at COMPASS.

The Primakoff reaction studies at COMPASS during the pilot hadron run in 2004 were performed with a 190 GeV  $\pi^-$  beam and Pb target. Additional samples with Cu, C and empty targets and a 190 GeV  $\mu^-$  beam were used to study background processes and estimate systematic errors. COMPASS provides unique conditions for the investigation of the Primakoff process: silicon detectors (spacial resolution better than  $16\mu\text{m}$ ) for the vertex position reconstruction and for the measurement of the pion scattering angle, an electromagnetic calorimeter for the photon 4-momentum reconstruction and a magnetic spectrometer for the determination of the scattered pion's momentum ([13],[14],[15],[17],[16]). Primakoff triggers were mainly based on the usage of the electromagnetic calorimeter and hodoscopes.

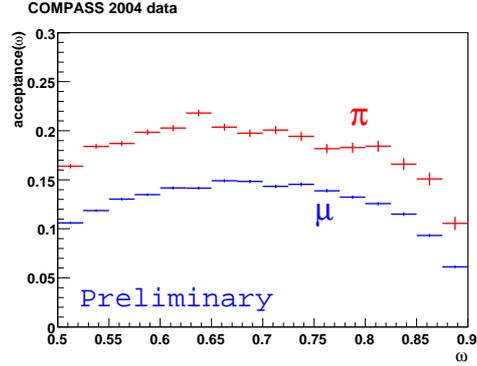
In our analysis we selected events with one primary vertex in the target region, one well measured outgoing track and one cluster in the central region of electromagnetic calorimeter. The exclusivity of Primakoff events is guaranteed by cuts on the total energy and  $Q^2$ . In addition to the electromagnetic scattering we have diffractive scattering processes with the same signature, for which the momentum transfer is not zero. The diffractive scattering produces a significant background in the region of large  $Q^2$  while the peak at  $Q^2 = 0$  corresponds to the Primakoff events. The contribution of the pion diffractive scattering can be deduced from the comparison of the  $Q^2$ -distributions for pions and muons (see Fig. 1). In our analysis we use events with  $Q^2 < Q_{max}^2 = 6.5 \times 10^{-3}(\text{GeV}/c)^2$ . To take into account the background from diffractive scattering in the Primakoff sample, we fit it with an exponential function in the range  $(2 \times 10^{-2} - 1 \times 10^{-1})(\text{GeV}/c)^2$  and extrapolate the fitted curve to  $Q^2 = 0$ . We also excluded the events with a  $\pi\gamma$  invariant mass  $M_{\pi\gamma} > 3.75 \times m_\pi$  to prevent misidentification of  $\rho^-$ -meson decay events due to the missing reconstruction of one of the photons from the  $\pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$  decay as Primakoff events. Due to similar reasons we have some background from the decay of beam kaons ( $\sim 4\%$  in the beam)  $K^- \rightarrow \pi^- + \pi^0$ . It was estimated and subtracted using the data with beam kaon decays up- and downstream of the target.

### 4. Pion polarizability extraction under the assumption of $\overline{\alpha}_\pi + \overline{\beta}_\pi = 0$

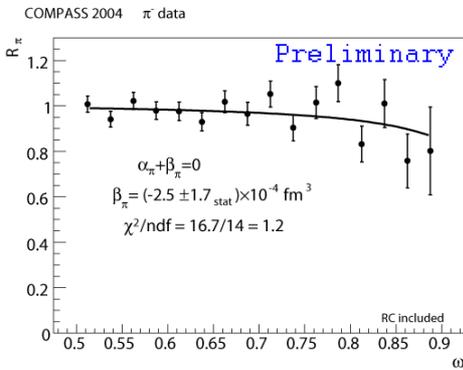
For a preliminary result on polarizabilities under assumption of  $\overline{\alpha}_\pi + \overline{\beta}_\pi = 0$  we compared the shapes of the differential cross sections  $d\sigma/d\omega$  measured and theoretically predicted for a point-like pion, where  $\omega = E_\gamma/E_{beam}$  is the relative energy of emitted photon. Only part of the total statistics was used. For the calculation of the acceptance we used a Monte Carlo simulation based on the Primakoff event generator POLARIS ([18]) and GEANT3 for the COMPASS setup description. The acceptance function (Fig. 2) has a smooth shape in the selected  $\omega$ -range and a similar behavior for pions and muons. That means that the COMPASS geometry and selection criteria are convenient to study the Primakoff reaction and the muon events can be used as a reference. Since the simulation was based on the Born approximation for the cross section, radiative corrections for Compton vertex, multiple photon exchange, vacuum polarization and nuclear charge screening by electrons were taken into account. The ratio of the cross sections is presented in Fig. 3 and 4 for pions and muons. In both cases it was fitted by a function of two free parameters: the absolute normalization and  $\overline{\beta}_\pi$ . In the case of muons the result of fit is consistent with the hypothesis of unstructured particles while for pions the result is  $\overline{\alpha}_\pi = -\overline{\beta}_\pi = 2.5 \pm 1.7 \times 10^{-4} \text{fm}^3$ . We estimated that the main contribution to the systematic uncertainty comes from the MC description and the total systematic uncertainty is  $\pm 0.6 \times 10^{-4} \text{fm}^3$ .



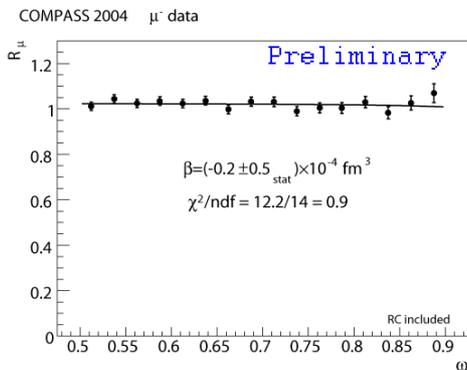
**Figure 1.**  $Q^2$ -distribution for pions and muons.



**Figure 2.** Acceptance for pions and muons as function of  $\omega$ .



**Figure 3.** Ratio of Primakoff cross sections for pions as function of  $\omega$ .



**Figure 4.** Ratio of Primakoff cross sections for muons as function of  $\omega$ .

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