
Two-Loop Heavy-Flavor Contribution to Bhabha Scattering

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In collaboration with:
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Plan of the Talk

- Introduction
- NNLO QED corrections:
 - Photonic contributions
 - Electron-Loop contributions
 - Heavy-Fermion-Loop contributions
- Numerics
- Summary

Why Bhabha Scattering?

- Bhabha Scattering is a fundamental process for e^+e^- collider physics because it is chosen for the precise evaluation of the **Luminosity**:

$$L = \frac{N}{\sigma_{th}}$$

where N is the measured number of Bhabha events and σ_{th} is the Bhabha cross section calculated from theory.

Since L enters as a normalization factor in the cross section measurements **a process in which δL is as small as possible is needed.**

- Bhabha scattering is a process with a **large** cross section and it is **QED** dominated \Rightarrow
 - it allows precise experimental measurements (large statistics);
 - it allows precise theoretical calculation of the cross section \Rightarrow **radiative corrections under control at the level of NNLO.**

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For LEP, luminometers were located between 1.4° and 2.9°

For ILC, they will be located between 0.7° and 2.3°

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Large-Angle

LABS is important for **low-energy accelerators** (meson factories), as for instance **DAΦNE**.

The KLOE experiment has luminometers located between 55° and 125°

The small energy makes in such a way that the weak contributions also in this case are negligible. At 10 GeV they are at the level of 0.1%

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- Leading Log-enhanced corr. (virtual and real) for SABS and LABS (Falldt-Osland '94, Arbuzov-Fadin-Kuraev-Lipatov-Merenkov-Trentadue '95-'97)
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- Log-enhanced photonic contributions (Glover-Tausk-van der Bij '01)
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- Constant term of photonic corrections not suppressed by the ratio m^2/s (Penin '05)
- HF contr. in the small- m_f limit (Actis-Czakon-Gluza-Riemann '07, Becher-Melnikov '07)
- HF contribution: complete analytic dep. on m_f (B.-Ferroglia-Penin '07)
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- Log-enhanced corr. (Bardin-Hollik-Riemann '90, Fadin-Lipatov-Martin-Melles '00, Jantzen-Kühn-Moch-Penin-Smirnov '01-'05)

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The diagram illustrates the expansion of the squared magnitude of the transition amplitude $\|\mathcal{M}\|^2$ into a sum of terms representing different orders of perturbation theory. Each term is enclosed in a vertical double-line box. The first row shows the tree-level contribution (two diagrams with a minus sign) and the first-order loop corrections (two diagrams labeled '1-Loop' and '2-Loop'). The second row shows the tree-level contribution with a wavy line (representing a loop) and the first-order loop corrections with a wavy line. The third row shows the tree-level contribution with two wavy lines and the first-order loop corrections with two wavy lines. Ellipses indicate higher-order terms.

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The diagram illustrates the expansion of the squared amplitude $\|\mathcal{M}\|^2$ into a series of terms. Each term is enclosed in a double vertical bar and squared. The first row shows tree-level diagrams (two diagrams with a minus sign) and one-loop diagrams (two shaded boxes labeled '1-Loop'). The second row shows tree-level diagrams with an additional wavy line and one-loop diagrams with a wavy line. The third row shows tree-level diagrams with two wavy lines and higher-order terms. Ellipses indicate that the series continues to higher loop orders.

$$\frac{d\sigma(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} = \frac{d\sigma_0(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right) \frac{d\sigma_1(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right)^2 \frac{d\sigma_2(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \mathcal{O}\left(\left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right)^3\right)$$

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$$\frac{d\sigma_0(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} = \frac{\alpha^2}{s} \left\{ \frac{1}{s^2} \left[st + \frac{s^2}{2} + (t - 2m^2)^2 \right] + \frac{1}{t^2} \left[st + \frac{t^2}{2} + (s - 2m^2)^2 \right] + \frac{1}{st} [(s + t)^2 - 4m^4] \right\}$$

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$$\frac{d\sigma(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} = \frac{d\sigma_0(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right) \frac{d\sigma_1(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right)^2 \frac{d\sigma_2(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \mathcal{O}\left(\left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right)^3\right)$$

$$\left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right) \frac{d\sigma_1^Y(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} = \frac{s}{16} \sum_{\text{spin}} \left\{ \left(\begin{array}{c} \text{tree} \\ \text{tree} \end{array} \right)^* \times \begin{array}{c} \text{tree} \\ \text{tree} \end{array} + \text{c.c.} + \dots \right\}$$

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$$\|\mathcal{M}\|^2 = \left\| \begin{array}{c} \text{tree} \\ \text{1-Loop} \\ \text{2-Loop} \\ \dots \end{array} \right\|^2$$

The diagram shows the expansion of the squared amplitude $\|\mathcal{M}\|^2$ into a sum of terms. Each term is a product of a tree-level amplitude and a loop amplitude. The tree-level amplitudes are shown as two diagrams: a t-channel exchange and an s-channel exchange. The loop amplitudes are shown as shaded boxes labeled '1-Loop' and '2-Loop'. The expansion is shown as a sum of terms, with the first term being the tree-level squared, and subsequent terms involving tree-level times loop, and loop squared terms.

$$\frac{d\sigma(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} = \frac{d\sigma_0(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right) \frac{d\sigma_1(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right)^2 \frac{d\sigma_2(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} + \mathcal{O}\left(\left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right)^3\right)$$

$$\left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right)^2 \frac{d\sigma_2^V(s, t, m^2)}{d\Omega} = \frac{s}{16} \sum_{\text{spin}} \left\{ \left(\begin{array}{c} \text{tree} \\ \text{tree} \end{array} \right)^* \times \left(\begin{array}{c} \text{1-Loop} \\ \text{1-Loop} \end{array} \right) + \text{c.c.} + \dots \right\}$$

The diagram shows the calculation of the two-loop virtual cross section $d\sigma_2^V$. It is expressed as a sum over spin states of the product of the complex conjugate of a tree-level amplitude and a one-loop amplitude, plus its complex conjugate and higher-order terms.

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Pure Photonic Corrections

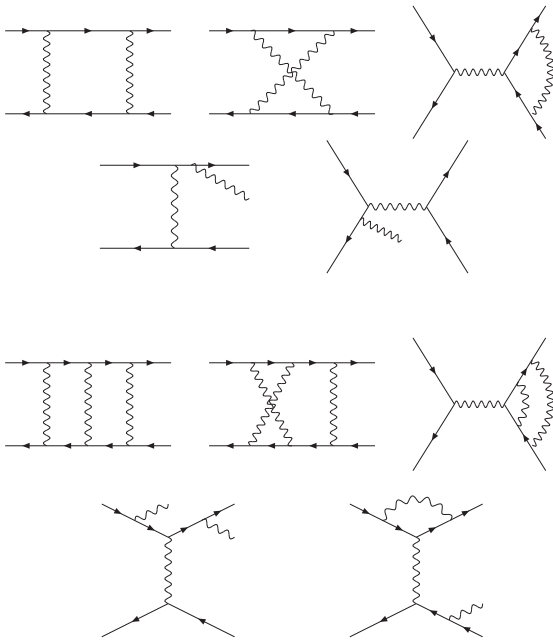
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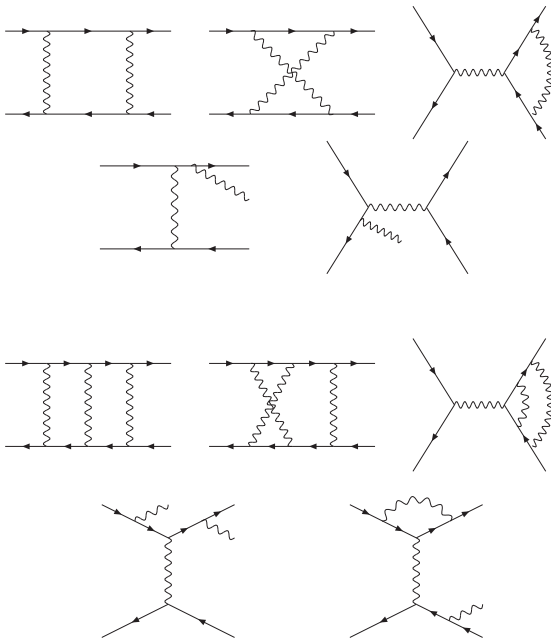
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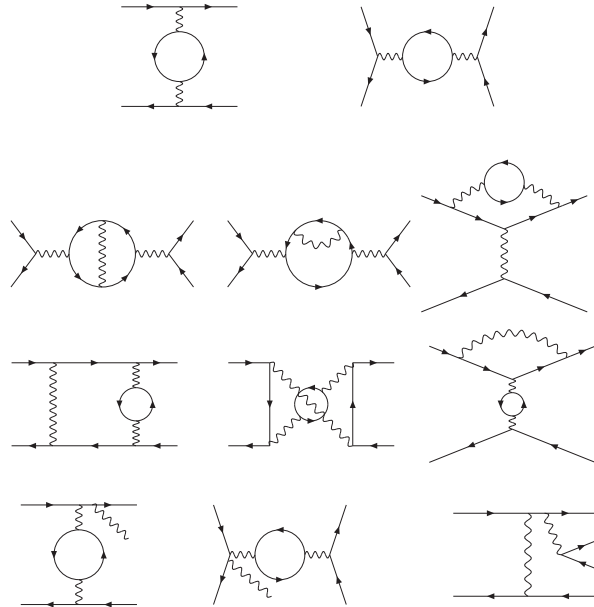
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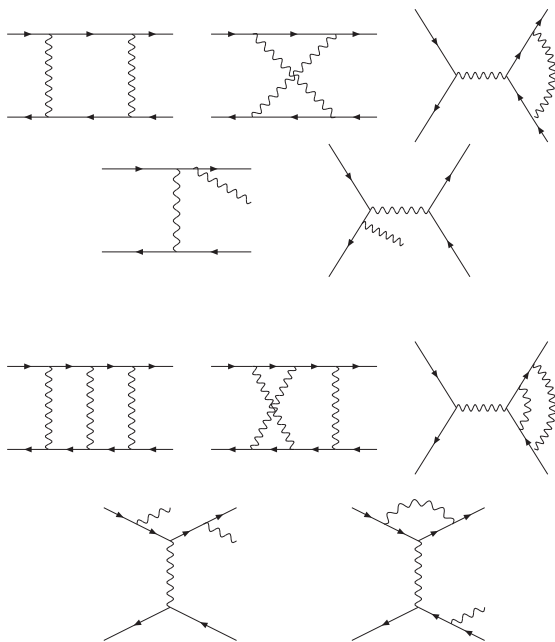
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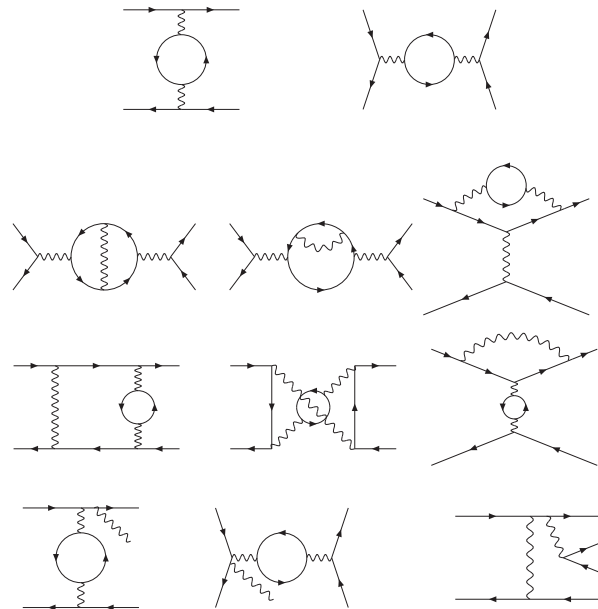
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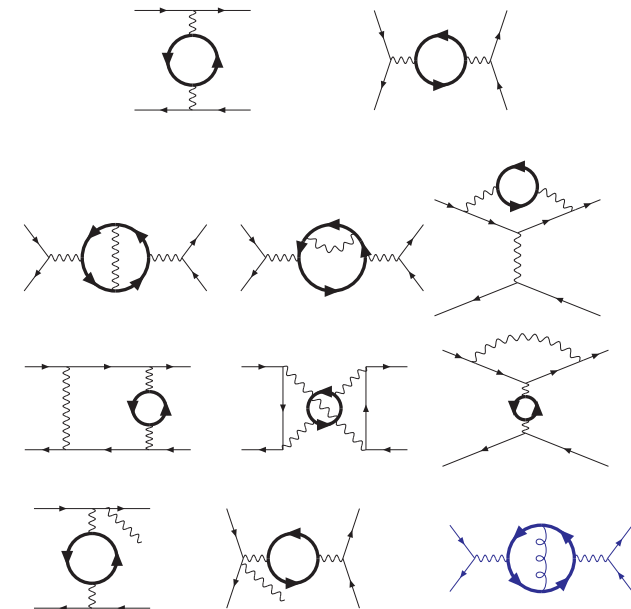
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Becher-Melnikov '07
Actis-Czakon-Gluza-Riemann '07
B.-Ferroglia-Penin '07

Mass Hierarchy

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The physical problem is characterized by a well defined mass hierarchy

● Low-Energy Acc.

$$m_e^2 \ll m_\mu^2 < m_c^2 \sim m_\tau^2 \sim m_b^2 \sim s, t, u \ll m_t^2$$

● High-Energy Acc.

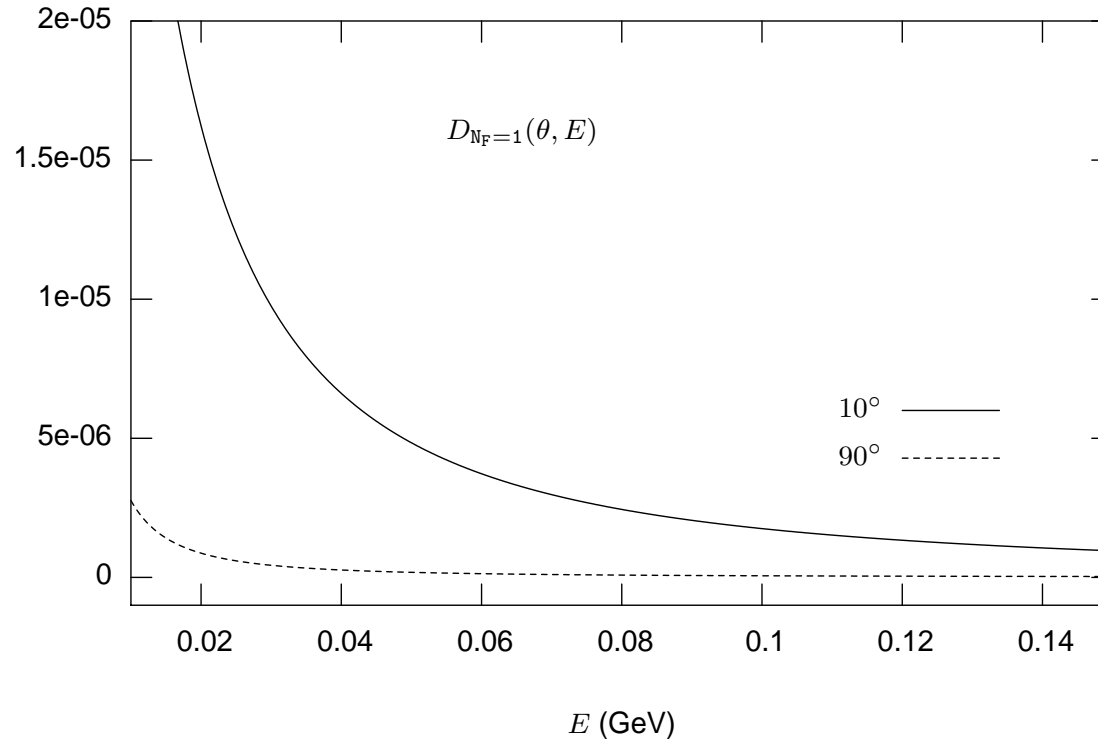
$$m_e^2 \ll m_{light-f}^2 \ll m_t^2 \sim s, t, u$$

The electron mass is always small compared to all the scales in the game

In both cases, therefore, the electron contribution provides the biggest fermionic contribution, followed by the muon

This hierarchy allows to calculate radiative corrections neglecting the mass of the electron, or, better, keeping the mass of the electron only in the log-enhanced terms, as a regulator for the collinear divergences

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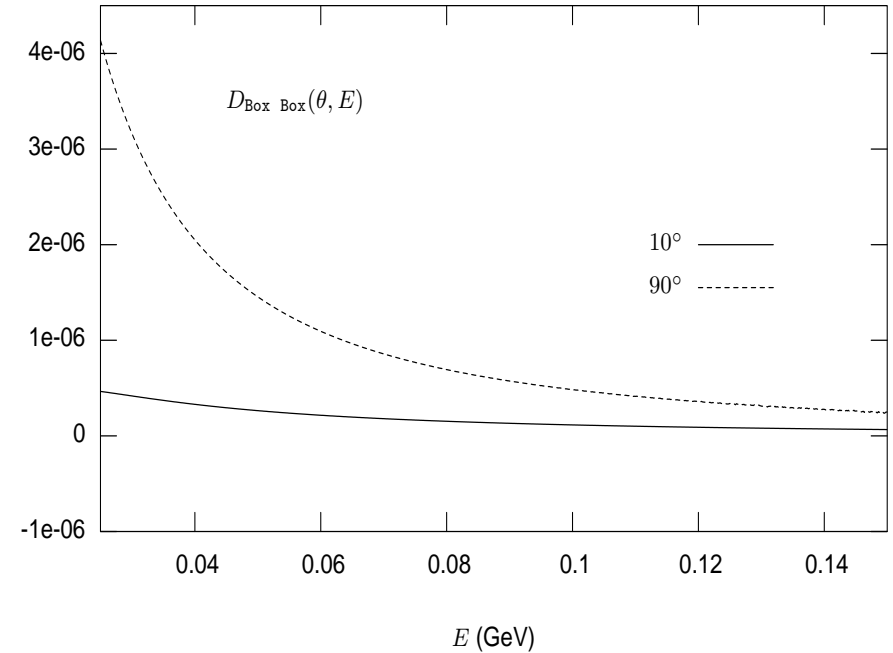
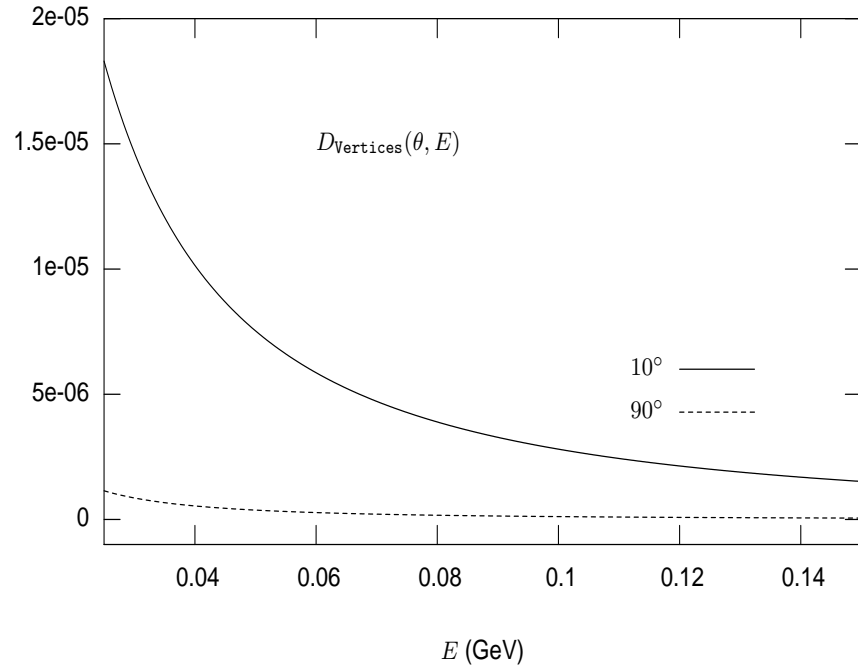


$$D_{N_F=1}(\theta, E) = \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right)^2 \left| \left(\frac{d\sigma_2^{(N_F=1)}}{d\Omega} - \frac{d\sigma_2^{(N_F=1)}}{d\Omega} \Big|_L \right) \right| \left(\frac{d\sigma_0}{d\Omega} + \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi}\right) \frac{d\sigma_1}{d\Omega} \right)^{-1}$$

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The Cross Section in the small- m_e limit

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At the NNLO the Cross Section has the following form:

$$\frac{d\sigma_2}{d\sigma_0} = \delta_2^{(2)}(\xi) \ln^2\left(\frac{s}{m_e^2}\right) + \delta_2^{(1)}(\xi) \ln\left(\frac{s}{m_e^2}\right) + \delta_2^{(0)}(\xi) + \mathcal{O}\left(\frac{m_e^2}{s}\right)$$

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However, already at 1° the terms of order m^2/t are TOTALLY negligible.

The Photonic Contribution

$$\frac{d\sigma_{phot}}{d\sigma_0} = \delta_{phot,2}^{(2)} \ln^2 \left(\frac{s}{m_e^2} \right) + \delta_{phot,1}^{(2)} \ln \left(\frac{s}{m_e^2} \right) + \delta_{phot,0}^{(2)}$$

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$\delta_{phot,2}^{(2)}$

known since

Arbuzov-Kuraev-Shaikhatdenov '98

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$\delta_{phot,i}^{(2)}$ Reconstruction from massless CS

For a generic QED/QCD process without closed fermion loops

$$\mathcal{M}^{(m \neq 0)} = \prod_{i \in \{\text{all legs}\}} Z_i^{\frac{1}{2}}(m, \epsilon) \mathcal{M}^{(m=0)}$$

where Z is the ratio between the massive and massless Dirac form factor

$$F^{(m \neq 0)}(Q^2) = Z(m, \epsilon) F^{(m=0)}(Q^2) + \mathcal{O}(m^2/Q^2)$$

Therefore, starting from the totally massless result of Bern-Dixon-Ghinkulov '00 one can reconstruct the photonic cross section where the collinear divergences are regulated with the mass of the electron

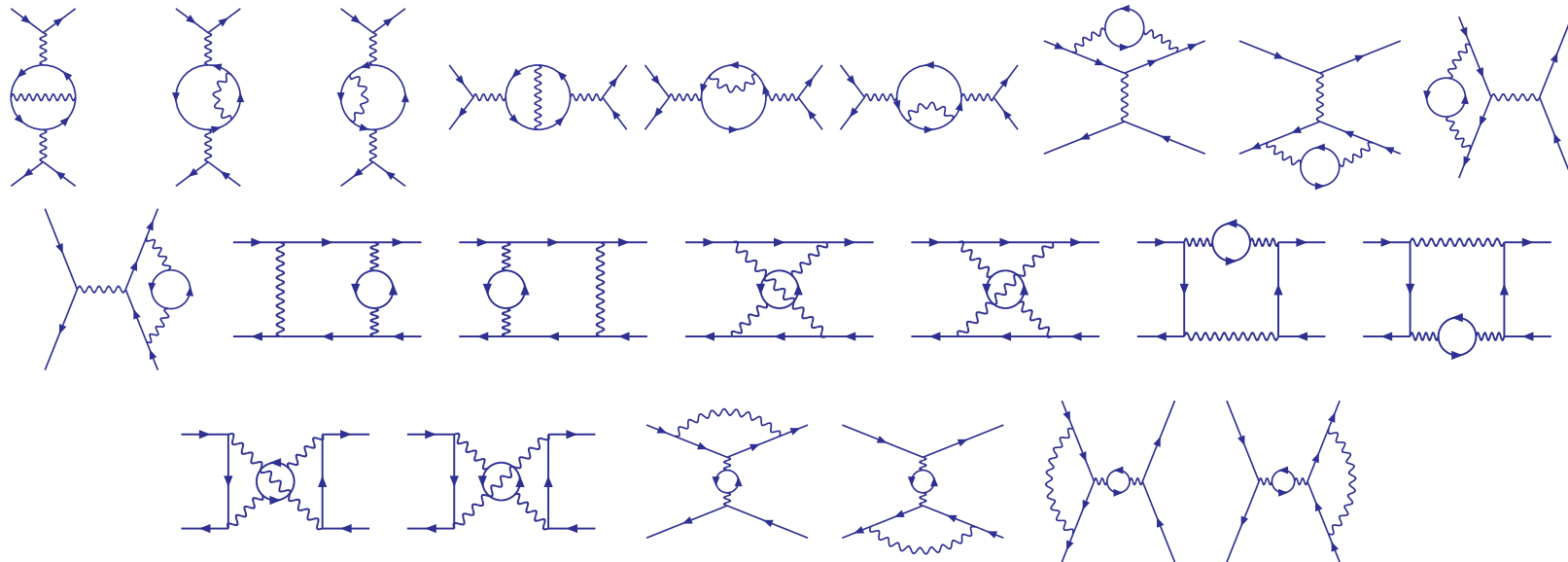
A. Mitov and S. Moch, JHEP 0705 (2007) 001.
T. Becher and K. Melnikov, JHEP 0706 (2007) 084.

The Electron-Loop Contribution

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The Cross Section is known with the full dependence on m_e

$$N_F = 1$$



- We calculated with standard methods the above set of Feynman diagrams
- UV and IR divergences regularized in dim reg, appear as poles in $(D - 4)$
- After UV-renormalization and inclusion of the real soft radiation, the set is finite
- Expanding in m_e

The Electron-Loop Contribution

$$\frac{d\sigma_{N_F=1}}{d\sigma_0} = \delta_{N_F=1,3}^{(2)} \ln^3 \left(\frac{s}{m_e^2} \right) + \delta_{N_F=1,2}^{(2)} \ln^2 \left(\frac{s}{m_e^2} \right) + \delta_{N_F=1,1}^{(2)} \ln \left(\frac{s}{m_e^2} \right) + \delta_{N_F=1,0}^{(2)}$$

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where:

$$\delta_{N_F=1,3}^{(2)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \xi + \xi^2)^2} \left| -\frac{1}{9} + \frac{2}{9}\xi - \frac{1}{3}\xi^2 + \frac{2}{9}\xi^3 - \frac{1}{9}\xi^4 \right|$$

$$\delta_{N_F=1,2}^{(2)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \xi + \xi^2)^2} \left| \ln \left(\frac{4w^2}{s} \right) \left(-\frac{4}{3} + \frac{8}{3}\xi - 4\xi^2 + \frac{8}{3}\xi^3 - \frac{4}{3}\xi^4 \right) - \left(\frac{17}{18} - \frac{17}{9}\xi + \frac{17}{6}\xi^2 - \frac{17}{9}\xi^3 + \frac{17}{18}\xi^4 \right) \right. \\ \left. - \left(\frac{1}{3} - \frac{2}{3}\xi + \xi^2 - \frac{2}{3}\xi^3 + \frac{1}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(1 - \xi) - \left(\frac{1}{3} - \frac{1}{3}\xi + \frac{1}{3}\xi^3 - \frac{1}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(\xi) \right|$$

$$\delta_{N_F=1,1}^{(2)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \xi + \xi^2)^2} \left| \ln \left(\frac{4w^2}{s} \right) \left(\frac{4}{3} - \frac{8}{3}\xi + 4\xi^2 - \frac{8}{3}\xi^3 + \frac{4}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(1 - \xi) + \left(\frac{32}{9} - \frac{64}{9}\xi + \frac{32}{3}\xi^2 - \frac{64}{9}\xi^3 \right. \right. \\ \left. \left. + \frac{32}{9}\xi^4 \right) - \left(\frac{8}{3} - \frac{14}{3}\xi + 6\xi^2 - \frac{10}{3}\xi^3 + \frac{4}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(\xi) \right| \dots$$

$$\delta_{N_F=1,0}^{(2)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \xi + \xi^2)^2} \left| \ln \left(\frac{4w^2}{s} \right) \left(-\frac{20}{9} + \frac{40}{9}\xi - \frac{20}{3}\xi^2 + \frac{40}{9}\xi^3 - \frac{20}{9}\xi^4 \right) \ln(1 - \xi) - \left(\frac{20}{9} - \frac{40}{9}\xi + \frac{20}{3}\xi^2 \right. \right. \\ \left. \left. - \frac{40}{9}\xi^3 + \frac{20}{9}\xi^4 \right) \dots \right|$$

In agreement with Becher-Melnikov '07 and Actis-Czakon-Gluza-Riemann '07

A. B. Arbuzov, E. A. Kuraev, N. P. Merenkov and L. Trentadue, Phys. Atom. Nucl. 60 (1997) 591
[Yad. Fiz. 60N4 (1997) 673]

R. B., A. Ferroglia, P. Mastrolia, E. Remiddi and J. J. van der Bij, Nucl. Phys. B716 (2005) 280

Soft-Pair Production

$$\frac{d\sigma_{Pair}}{d\sigma_0} = \delta_{Pair,3}^{(2)} \ln^3 \left(\frac{s}{m_e^2} \right) + \delta_{Pair,2}^{(2)} \ln^2 \left(\frac{s}{m_e^2} \right) + \delta_{Pair,1}^{(2)} \ln \left(\frac{s}{m_e^2} \right) + \delta_{Pair,0}^{(2)}$$

where:

$$\delta_{Pair,3}^{(2)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \xi + \xi^2)^2} \left(\frac{1}{9} - \frac{2}{9}\xi + \frac{1}{3}\xi^2 - \frac{2}{9}\xi^3 + \frac{1}{9}\xi^4 \right)$$

$$\delta_{Pair,2}^{(2)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \xi + \xi^2)^2} \left[\ln \left(\frac{4w^2}{s} \right) \left(\frac{1}{3} - \frac{2}{3}\xi + \xi^2 - \frac{2}{3}\xi^3 + \frac{1}{3}\xi^4 \right) - \left(\frac{1}{3} - \frac{2}{3}\xi + \xi^2 - \frac{2}{3}\xi^3 + \frac{1}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(1 - \xi) \right. \\ \left. - \left(\frac{5}{9} - \frac{10}{9}\xi + \frac{5}{3}\xi^2 - \frac{10}{9}\xi^3 + \frac{5}{9}\xi^4 \right) + \left(\frac{1}{3} - \frac{2}{3}\xi + \xi^2 - \frac{2}{3}\xi^3 + \frac{1}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(\xi) \right]$$

$$\delta_{Pair,1}^{(2)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \xi + \xi^2)^2} \left[\ln^2 \left(\frac{4w^2}{s} \right) \left(\frac{1}{3} - \frac{2}{3}\xi + \xi^2 - \frac{2}{3}\xi^3 + \frac{1}{3}\xi^4 \right) + \ln \left(\frac{4w^2}{s} \right) \left(-\frac{2}{3} + \frac{4}{3}\xi - 2\xi^2 + \frac{4}{3}\xi^3 \right. \right. \\ \left. \left. - \frac{2}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(1 - \xi) - \left(\frac{10}{9} - \frac{20}{9}\xi + \frac{10}{3}\xi^2 - \frac{20}{9}\xi^3 + \frac{10}{9}\xi^4 \right) + \left(\frac{2}{3} - \frac{4}{3}\xi + \dots \right) \right]$$

$$\delta_{Pair,0}^{(2)} = \frac{1}{(1 - \xi + \xi^2)^2} \left[\ln^2 \left(\frac{4w^2}{s} \right) \left(-\frac{1}{3} + \frac{2}{3}\xi - \xi^2 + \frac{2}{3}\xi^3 - \frac{1}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(1 - \xi) + \left(\frac{1}{3} - \frac{2}{3}\xi + \xi^2 \right. \right. \\ \left. \left. - \frac{2}{3}\xi^3 + \frac{1}{3}\xi^4 \right) \ln(\xi) \right] \dots$$

A. B. Arbuzov, E. A. Kuraev, N. P. Merenkov and L. Trentadue, Phys. Atom. Nucl. 60 (1997) 591 [Yad. Fiz. 60N4 (1997) 673]; Nucl. Phys. B474 (1996) 271.

Heavy-Fermion Contribution

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$$m_e^2 \ll m_f^2 \ll s, t, u$$

T. Becher and K. Melnikov, JHEP 0706 (2007) 084.
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- but it is also possible to keep the full dependence on the heavy-fermion mass

$$m_e^2 \ll m_f^2 \sim s, t, u$$

R. B., A. Ferroglia, A. A. Penin, Phys. Rev. Lett. 100 (2008) 131601; JHEP 0802 (2008) 080.

Heavy-Fermion Contribution: small- m_f

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Reconstruction from massless CS

If we include closed fermion loops, the formula changes a bit

$$\mathcal{M}^{(m \neq 0)} = Z^2(m, \epsilon) \mathcal{M}^{(m=0)} S(s, t, u, m_f, \epsilon)$$

where Z is the ratio between the massive and massless Dirac form factor and S is the “soft” function, calculated in SCET.

Again, from the totally massless result of Bern-Dixon-Ghinkulov '00, one can reconstruct the N_F part of the CS, in the limit $m_e \ll m_f \ll s, t, u$

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Diagrammatic Calculation

- reduction to the MIs with the Laporta algorithm
- calculation of the MIs directly in the $m_e/s \rightarrow 0$ limit with Mellin-Barnes

S. Actis, M. Czakon, J. Gluza and T. Riemann, Nucl. Phys. B 786 (2007) 26.

Heavy-Fermion Contribution: small- m_f

The constraint $m_e^2 \ll m_f^2 \ll s, t, u$ is well verified for instance for leptons at high-energy accelerators (ILC) and for the muon at meson factories.

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However it is no longer satisfied in the following cases

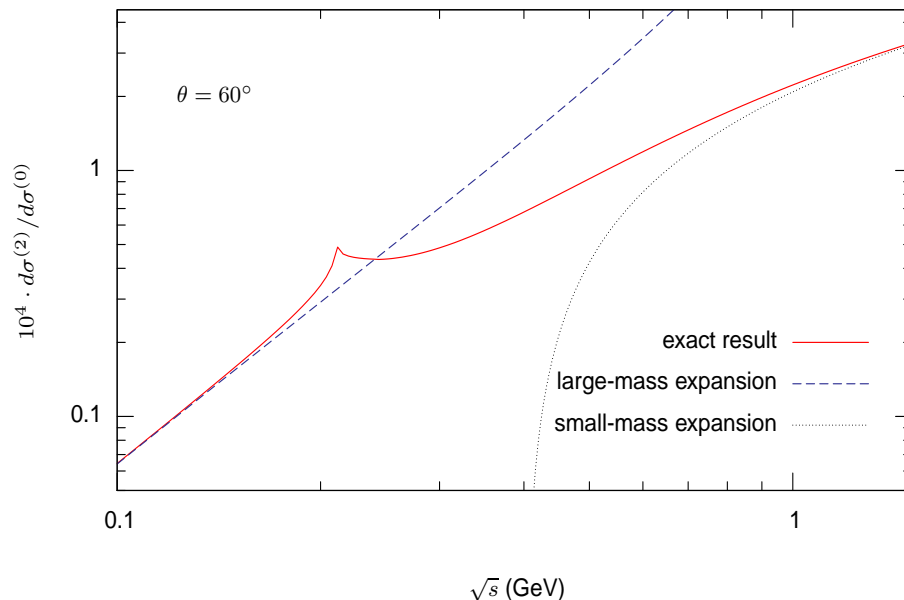
- Contributions coming from a tau loop at KLOE energies ($m_\tau \sim \sqrt{s}$)
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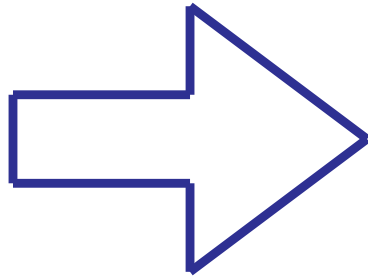
Two-loop corrections to the Bhabha scattering differential cross section at $\theta = 60^\circ$ due to a closed loop of muon. The solid line represents the exact result. The dashed and dotted lines represent the results of the large-mass expansion and small-mass expansion, respectively.

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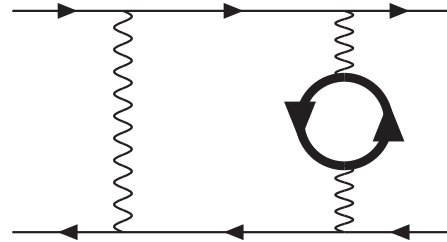


A solution with the full dependence on m_f is desirable

Heavy-Fermion Contribution: exact m_f

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- Each two-loop heavy-fermion box diagram in a physical gauge is collinear-safe!
(Frenkel-Taylor '76)

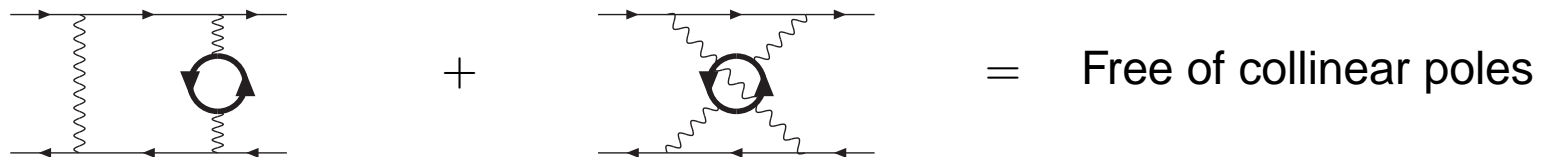
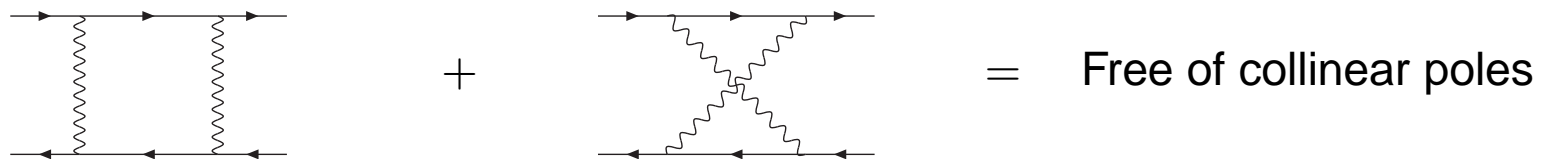


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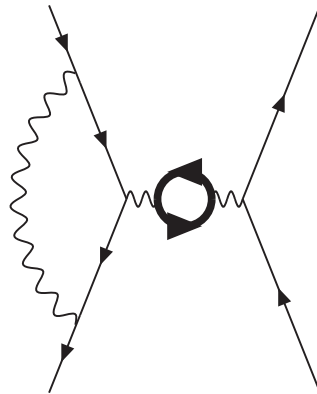
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⇒ we can choose from the beginning $m_e = 0$ in the calculation, reducing, effectively, the number of scales in the game from 4 to 3.

Moreover, we can evaluate the boxes in Feynman gauge.

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- The collinear divergence comes from the other sets of graphs. In particular it is possible to show that it comes from the reducible ones!



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⇒ in these trivial diagrams we can keep the electrom mass and the heavy-fermion mass different from zero.

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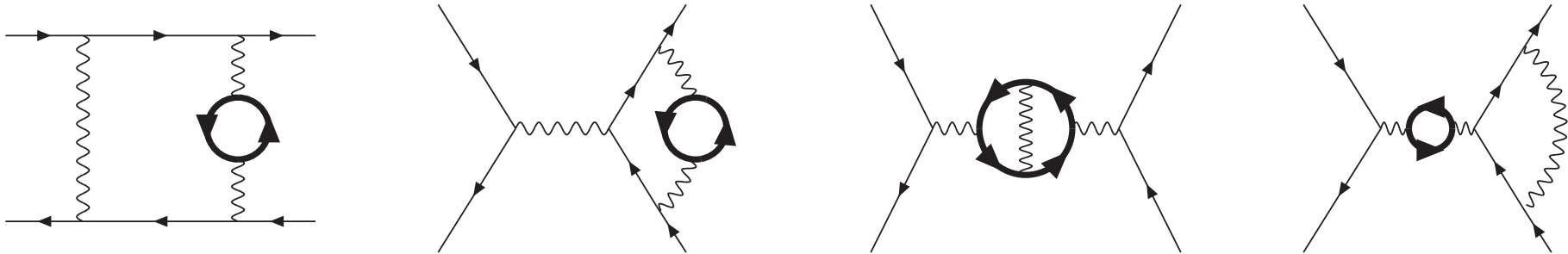
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⇒ in these trivial diagrams we can keep the electrom mass and the heavy-fermion mass different from zero.

The collinear structure of the cross section is

$$\frac{d\sigma_{N_F > 1}}{d\sigma_0} = \delta_{N_F > 1,1}^{(2)}(s, t, m_f^2) \ln\left(\frac{s}{m_e^2}\right) + \delta_{N_F > 1,0}^{(2)}(s, t, m_f^2)$$

Boxes and two-loop vertices contribute to $\delta_{N_F > 1,0}^{(2)}(s, t, m_f^2)$ while the reducible diagrams contribute to $\delta_{N_F > 1,1}^{(2)}(s, t, m_f^2)$

Heavy-Fermion Contribution: exact m_f

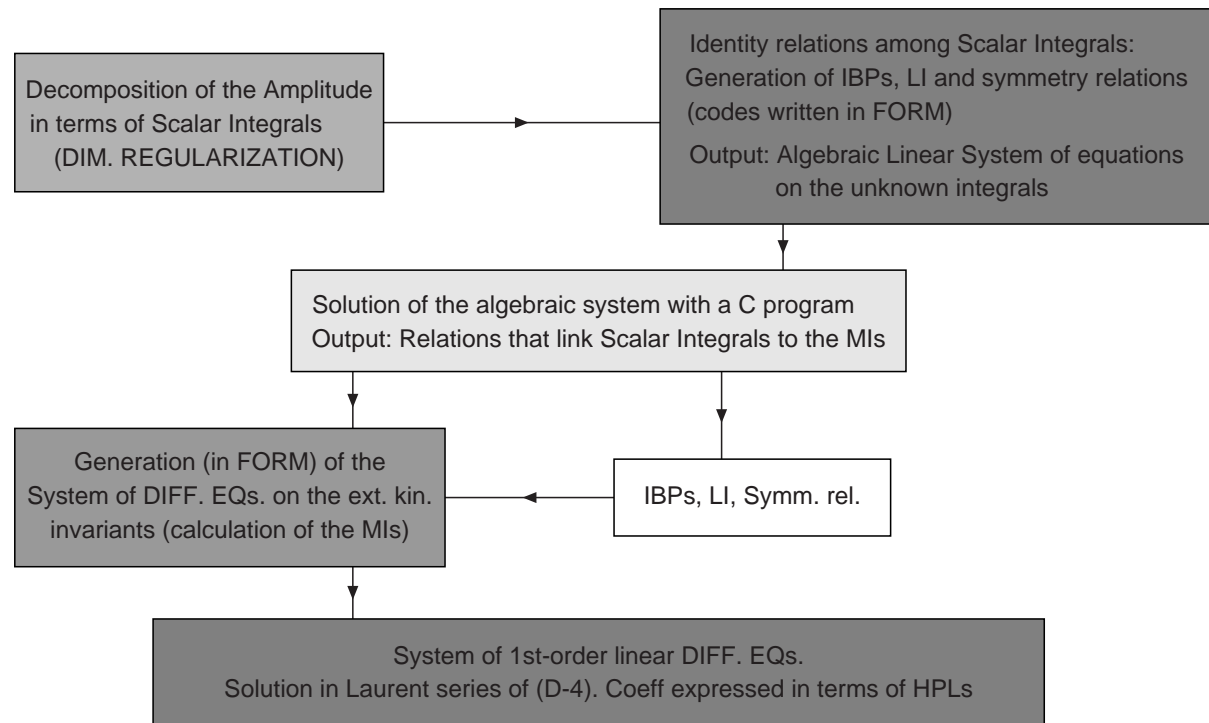


Laporta Algorithm

- Reduction to the MIs

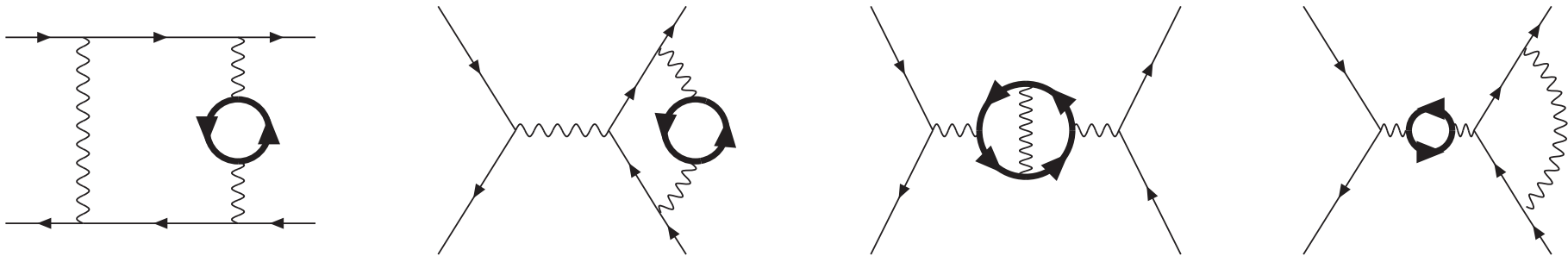
Differential Equations

- Analytic evaluation of the MIs



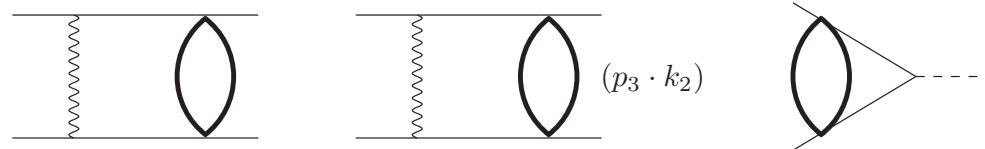
(B-Ferrogli-Penin '07-'08)

Heavy-Fermion Contribution: exact m_f



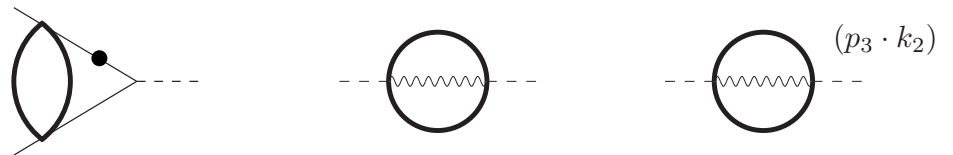
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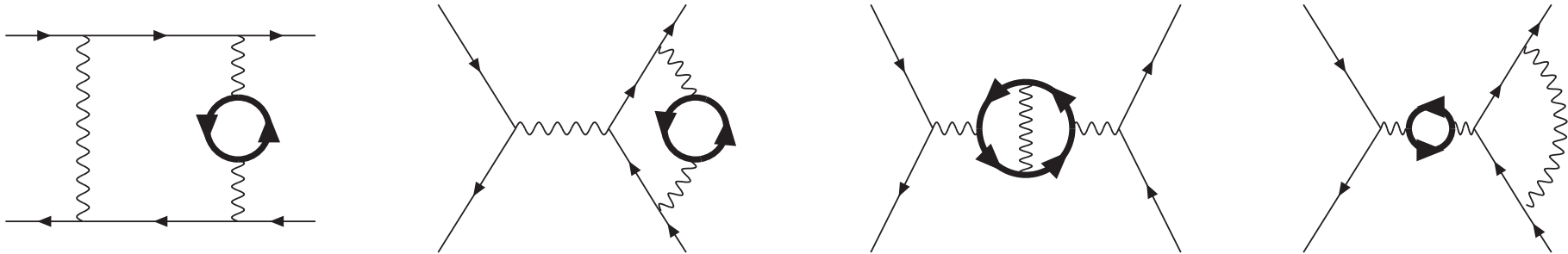
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Laporta Algorithm

- Reduction to the MIs

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{---} \\ \text{---} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{---} \\ \text{---} \end{array} = \sum_{i=-3}^0 M_{1,i}(m_f^2, x; y) (D-4)^i + \mathcal{O}(D-4)$$

Differential Equations

- Analytic evaluation of the MIs

$$M_{1,-3} = -\frac{1}{2m_f^2 x}$$

$$M_{1,-2} = \frac{1}{4m_f^2 x} \left[2 - G(0; x) - \frac{y+4}{\sqrt{y(y+4)}} G(-\mu; y) \right]$$

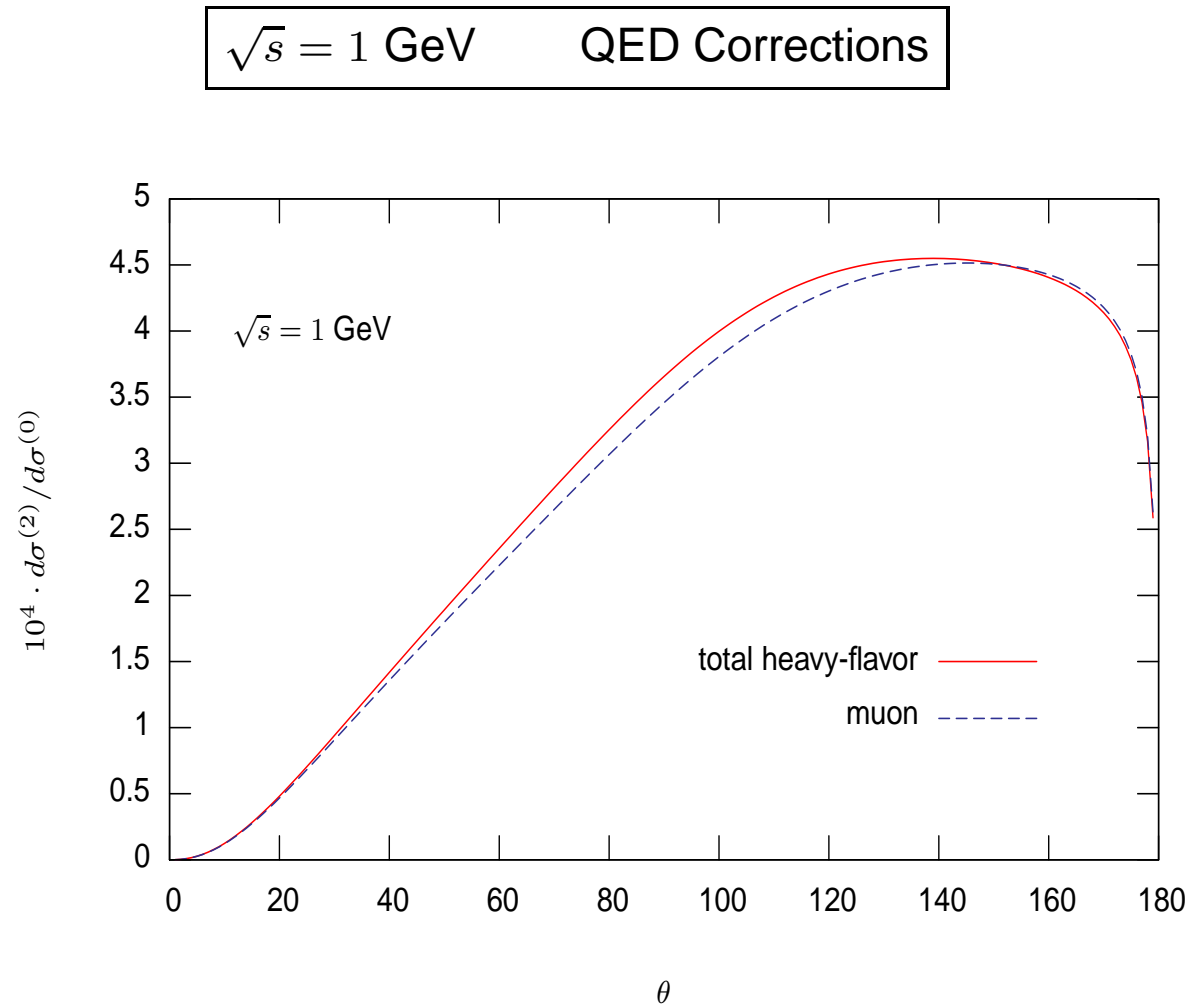
$$\begin{aligned}
 M_{1,-1} = & \frac{1}{8m_f^2 x} \left[-4 + \zeta(2) + 2G(0; x) - G(0, 0; x) + 2G(-\mu, -\mu; y) \right. \\
 & \left. + \frac{y+4}{\sqrt{y(y+4)}} \left[2G(-\mu; y) - 3G(-4, -\mu; y) - G(0; x)G(-\mu; y) \right] \right]
 \end{aligned}$$

$$M_{1,0} = \dots$$

(B-Ferrogli-Penin '07-'08)

Numerical Analysis

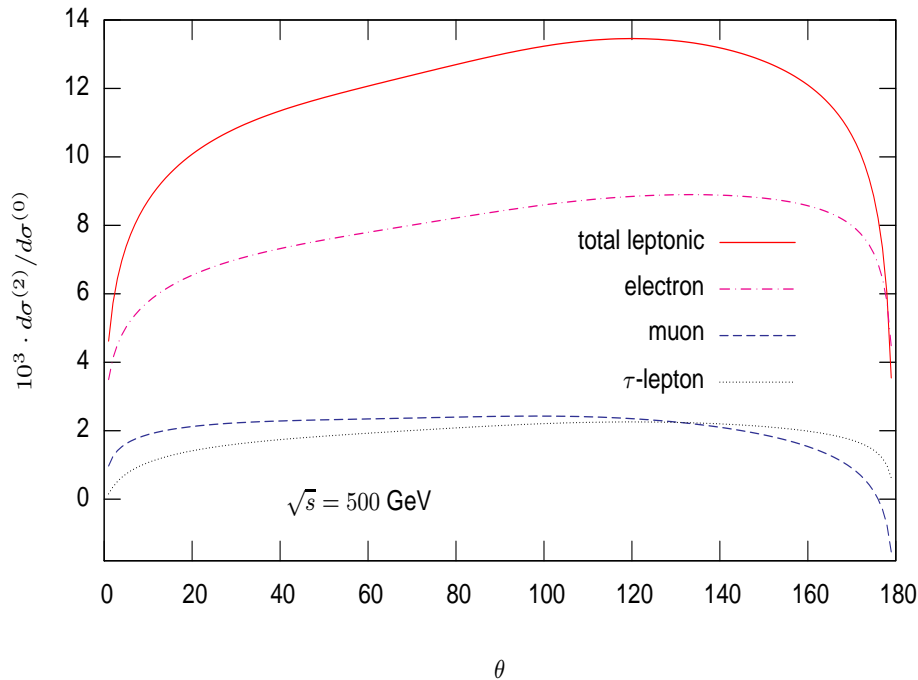
Numerical Analysis



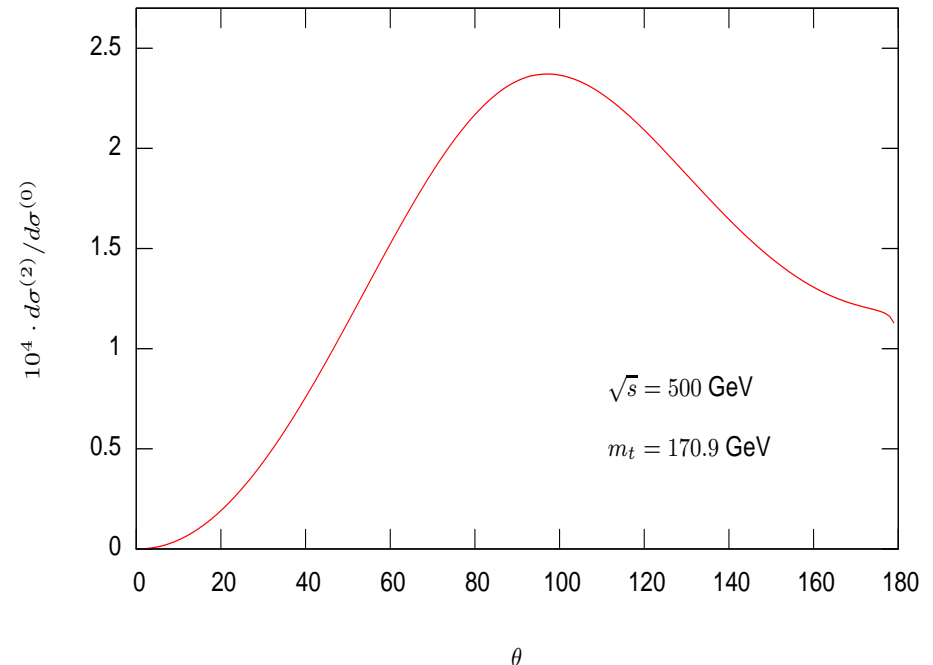
Two-loop corrections to the Bhabha scattering differential cross section at $\sqrt{s} = 1 \text{ GeV}$ due to a closed loop of muon (dashed line). The solid line represents the sum of the contributions of the muon, τ -lepton, and heavy-quarks. The τ is already two orders of magnitude suppressed.

Numerical Analysis

$\sqrt{s} = 500 \text{ GeV}$ QED Corrections



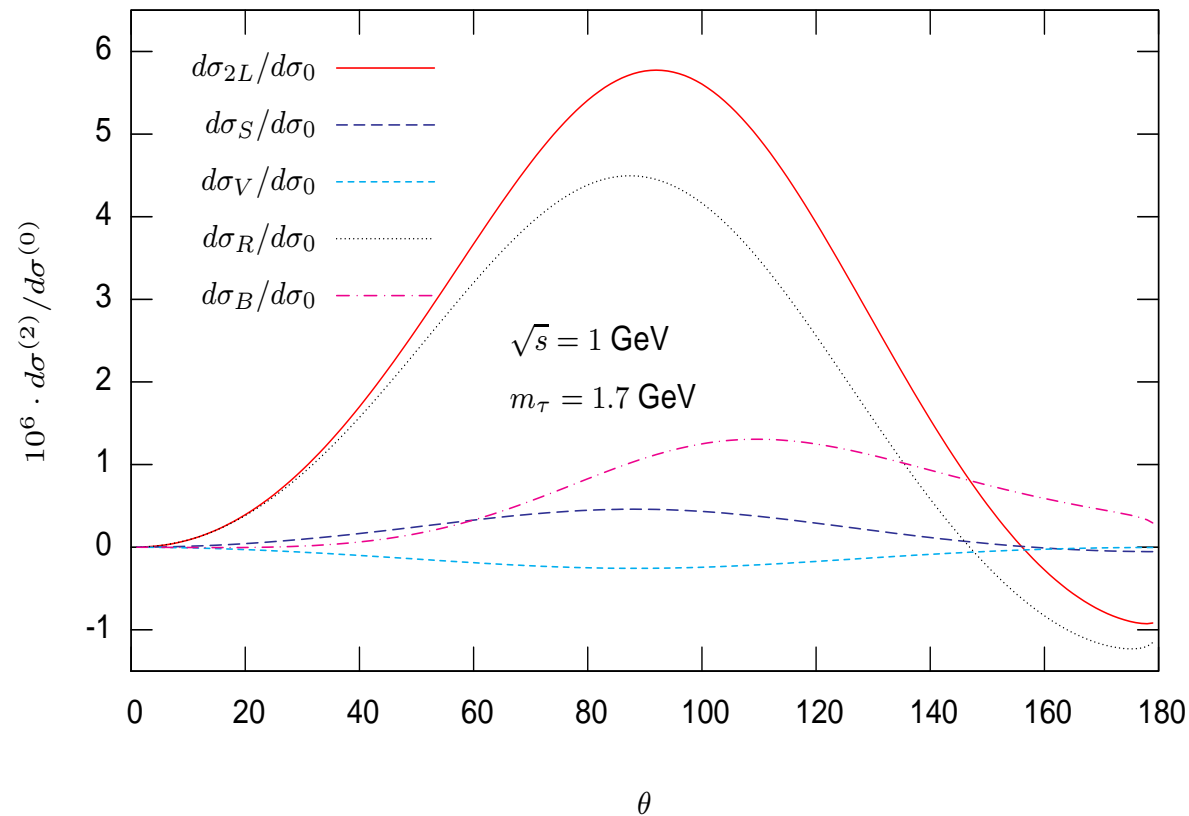
Two-loop leptonic corrections to the Bhabha scattering differential cross section at $\sqrt{s} = 500 \text{ GeV}$. The dash-dotted line represents the electron contribution including the soft-pair radiation. The dashed and dotted lines represent the contributions of muon and τ -lepton. The solid line is the sum of the three.



Two-loop corrections to the Bhabha scattering differential cross section at $\sqrt{s} = 500 \text{ GeV}$ due to a closed loop of top quark for $m_t = 170.9 \text{ GeV}$.

Numerical Analysis

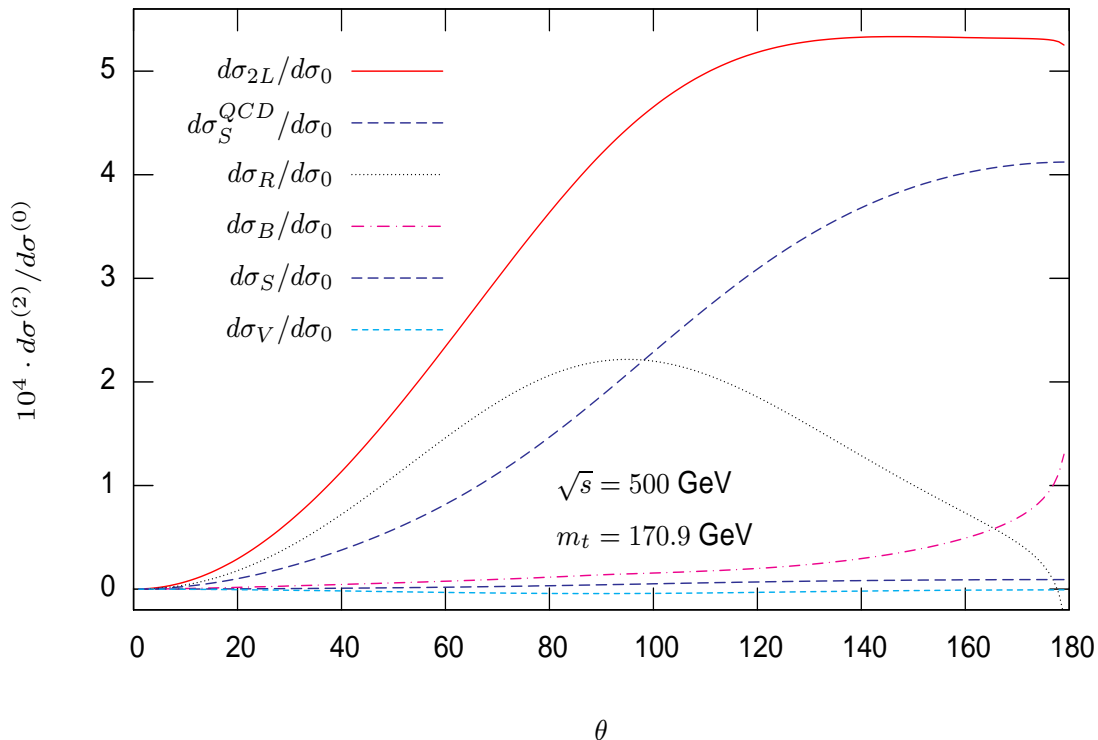
$\sqrt{s} = 1 \text{ GeV}$ Structure of the QED Corrections



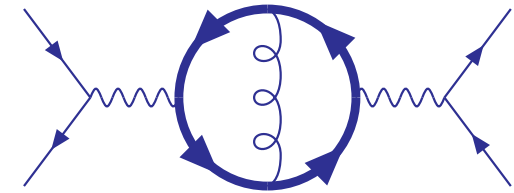
Self-energy (“ S ”), vertex (“ V ”), reducible plus one-loop times one-loop (“ R ”), and box (“ B ”) contributions to the two-loop τ -lepton correction to the differential cross section of Bhabha scattering at $\sqrt{s} = 1 \text{ GeV}$.

Numerical Analysis

$\sqrt{s} = 500 \text{ GeV}$ Including QCD Corrections



QED and QCD self-energy (“S”), vertex (“V”), reducible plus one-loop times one-loop (“R”) and box (“B”) contribution to the two-loop top-quark corrections to the differential cross section of Bhabha scattering at $\sqrt{s} = 500 \text{ GeV}$.



$$\left. \frac{d\sigma_2^V}{d\Omega} \right|_{(2l,S)}^{QCD} = \frac{C_F}{Q_f^2} \frac{\alpha_s(m_f^2)}{\alpha} \left. \frac{d\sigma_2^V}{d\Omega} \right|_{(2l,S)}$$

$C_F = (N_c^2 - 1)/(2N_c)$ is the Casimir operator of the fundamental representation of the $SU(N_c)$ color group, and the strong coupling constant is evaluated at the scale $\mu = m_f$, using the NLO RG equation with the appropriate number of active quarks, starting from the input value $\alpha_S(M_Z) = 0.118$.

Summary

- Bhabha scattering is among the “easiest” processes to be studied in perturbation theory (it is basically “only” QED). This is the reason why its CS is known at the level of NNLO quantum corrections
- In the past years, several groups contributed to the calculation of the CS. The state of the art includes
 - The complete NLO in the full Electroweak Standard Model
 - The full set of NNLO QED corrections ($\mathcal{O}(\alpha^4)$ and $\mathcal{O}(\alpha^3\alpha_S)$) and hadronic effects for the process $e^+e^- \rightarrow e^+e^-$
- These corrections have been included already in several Monte Carlos that provide, at the moment, a very good precision. In the case of LABS at DAΦNE energies the CS is known at the level of better than 0.1%
- In order to complete the knowledge of the Bhabha scattering CS at the level of NNLO perturbative corrections (mostly for esthetic reasons), some pieces are still missing:
 - the soft-pair production contribution is known at the logarithmic level
 - the process $e^+e^- \rightarrow e^+e^- + \gamma$ (hard photon) enters in the MCs at the LO
 - the two-loop electroweak logarithmic corrections in four-fermion processes are studied (for instance for $e^+e^- \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-$), but not yet included in the analysis