

# Improved description of the nucleon polarizabilities with relativistic Chiral Effective Field Theory

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In this contribution we present a calculation of the double virtual Compton scattering process at low  $Q^2$ . We employ the relativistic formulation of chiral effective field theory with baryons, including also the  $\Delta(1232)$  as a dynamical degree of freedom. The  $Q^2$  evolution of the lowest order scalar and spin polarizabilities are extracted from the Compton tensor, and are compared to experimental as well as to previous chiral and dispersive determinations. We also discuss the impact of this improvement in the Proton Radius Puzzle.

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## 1. Introduction

The study of the internal electromagnetic structure of the nucleon has been a very active field since decades from both, theoretical and experimental sides. Several experiments have been conducted along these years with the final goal of understanding, from first principles, how the nucleon responds under electromagnetic probes. This will lead to a better determination of the output of experiments in which the electromagnetic response of the nucleon plays a prominent role. To the level of precision of the experimental programs running nowadays, one usually needs to go beyond the one photon exchange approximation. One important example is the study of the  $e^- p$  scattering, where the two photon exchange (TPE) corrections can play a fundamental role in the determination of the proton radius [1]. These corrections have two kinds of contributions, one coming from the form factors of the nucleon, and another generated by the polarizabilities of the nucleon. This last one has been object of intensive study from the theory side, due to the potential that they have to solve the so-called "Proton Radius Puzzle" [2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14]. The polarizabilities are simply the moments of the electromagnetic response of the nucleon, and can be connected to their classical definition of through the low energy expansion of an effective  $\gamma\gamma NN$  Lagrangian [15, 16]. Their determination has been subject of several experimental programs in the past [17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24], and are still object of recent experimental analyses.

Since the polarizabilities encode the response of the constituents of the nucleon under electromagnetic probes, they provide an excellent test ground for quantum chromodynamics (QCD). Unfortunately, in the energy region of interest here, QCD is not solvable through a perturbative approach, and the determination of the polarizabilities in terms of quark and gluon degrees of freedom becomes a tough task [25]. Nevertheless, it is still possible to work within a framework embodying the relevant symmetries of QCD at low energies, in which the degrees of freedom are not quarks and gluons but hadrons. This framework is commonly known as chiral effective field theory (chiral EFT), and has been very successful in explaining the structure of the nucleon on chiral symmetry grounds.

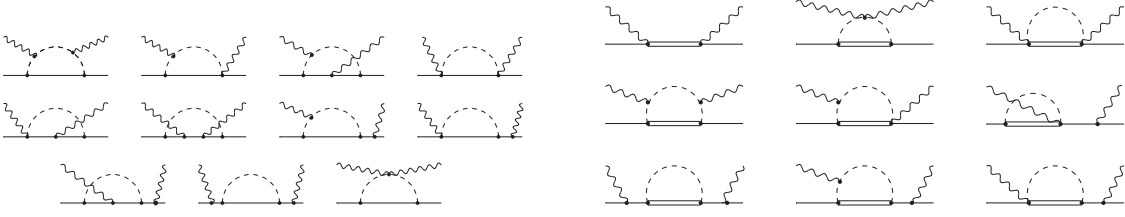
Here we will follow the relativistic approach [26, 27], including also the  $\Delta(1232)$  resonance as a dynamical degree of freedom, to study the  $Q^2$  evolution of the lowest order scalar and spin polarizabilities of the nucleon appearing in the double virtual Compton scattering (VVCS). Later, we also study the impact of the improved description of these polarizabilities on the calculation of the polarizability contribution to the muonic hydrogen Lamb shift.

## 2. Polarizabilities

The object of our study are the lowest-order polarizabilities entering in the description of the forward VVCS. Traditionally, the amplitude describing this process is written in the following non-relativistic form

$$T(\mathbf{v}, Q^2) = f_L(\mathbf{v}, Q^2) + (\vec{\epsilon}'^* \cdot \vec{\epsilon}) f_T(\mathbf{v}, Q^2) + i\vec{\sigma} \cdot (\vec{\epsilon}'^* \times \vec{\epsilon}) g_{TT}(\mathbf{v}, Q^2) - i\vec{\sigma} \cdot [(\vec{\epsilon}'^* - \epsilon) \times \hat{q}] g_{LT}(\mathbf{v}, Q^2) \quad (2.1)$$

where  $\mathbf{v} = (s - m_N^2 + Q^2)/2m_N$  and  $Q^2$  are the photon energy and virtuality, respectively, being  $m_N$  the nucleon mass, and  $\vec{q}$  the three momentum of the photon. Notice that  $f_L$  and  $f_T$  encode the



**Figure 1:** Diagrams computed in the evaluation of the Compton tensor. The left panel shows the diagrams with the  $\pi N$  loops, while the right one shows the diagrams that involve the  $\Delta$  as intermediate state.

spin-independent response of the nucleon, while  $g_{TT}$  and  $g_{LT}$  contain information about the spin-dependent one. These functions can be splitted into a Born and a non-Born part. While the Born part is determined by the global properties of the nucleon as the mass, charge and anomalous magnetic moment [28, 29], the non-Born part is related to the polarizabilities. A low energy expansion of these functions allows us to identify the polarizabilities as the coefficients of the expansions in terms of  $v$  and  $Q^2$

$$f_T(v, Q^2) = f_T^{(Born)}(v, Q^2) + 4\pi Q^2 \beta_{M1} + 4\pi(\alpha_{E1} + \beta_{M1})v^2 + \dots \quad (2.2)$$

$$f_L(v, Q^2) = f_L^{(Born)}(v, Q^2) + 4\pi\alpha_{E1}Q^2 + 4\pi\alpha_L v^2 Q^2 + \dots \quad (2.3)$$

$$g_{TT}(v, Q^2) = g_{TT}^{(Born)}(v, Q^2) + 4\pi\gamma_0 v^3 + \dots \quad (2.4)$$

$$g_{LT}(v, Q^2) = g_{LT}^{(Born)}(v, Q^2) + 4\pi\delta_{LT} v^2 Q + \dots \quad (2.5)$$

As commented in the introduction, the approach that we use to calculate these functions is the relativistic formulation of chiral EFT with baryons, including the  $\Delta(1232)$ -resonance as an explicit degree of freedom. This approach has provided important progress in the understanding of fundamental hadronic reactions involving one baryon, as well as on the structure of the nucleon [30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36]. Here we perform the calculation up to order  $\mathcal{O}(p^4/\Delta)$  in the  $\delta$ -counting. The diagrams involved in this calculation are shown in Fig. 1. Up to this order, the calculation is a *prediction*, i. e., there is no free parameter to fit. In our calculations, we also include a dipole form factor in the magnetic  $\gamma N \Delta$  transition form factor

$$g_M \rightarrow \frac{g_M}{(1 + Q^2/0.71)^2} \quad (2.6)$$

following Ref. [37]. There, it was shown that this inclusion is important in order to agree with data on electroproduction, which is related, via dispersion relations, to the  $Q^2$  evolution of the polarizabilities.

In Fig. 2 we show our results (blue band) for the scalar polarizabilities of the proton and neutron. These are compared to the leading-order heavy baryon (HB) result (blue dashed line) and the MAID model (black dotted line). We also plot the leading-order relativistic result (red line) to show importance of the  $\Delta(1232)$ . In this figure, as well as in Fig. 3, the error bands (the blue ones) are calculated using a relative  $Q^2$ -dependent error  $\tilde{\delta}(Q^2)$  defined as:

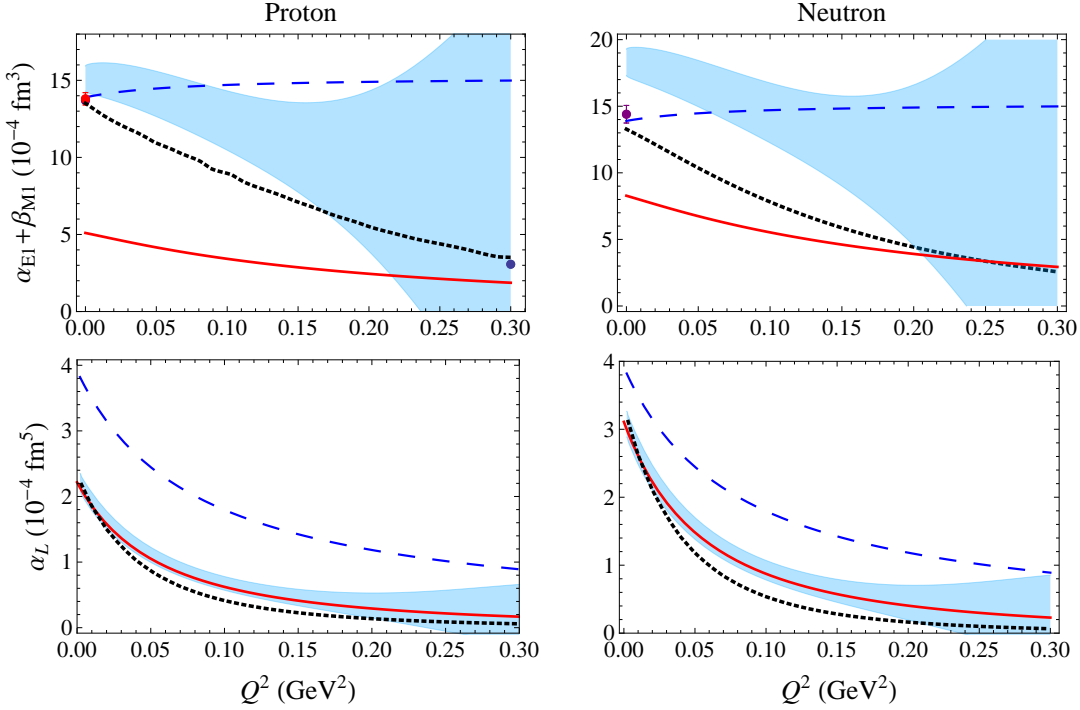
$$\tilde{\delta}(Q^2) = \frac{1}{3} \left( \frac{\delta}{m_N} + \sqrt{\frac{M_\pi}{m_N}} + \sqrt{\frac{Q^2}{m_N^2}} \right) \quad (2.7)$$

for  $Q < \delta$ , and

$$\tilde{\delta}(Q^2) = \sqrt{\frac{Q^2}{\delta^2}} \quad (2.8)$$

for  $Q > \delta$ , being  $M_\pi$  and  $m_\Delta$  the pion and  $\Delta(1232)$  masses, respectively, and  $\delta = m_\Delta - m_N$ .

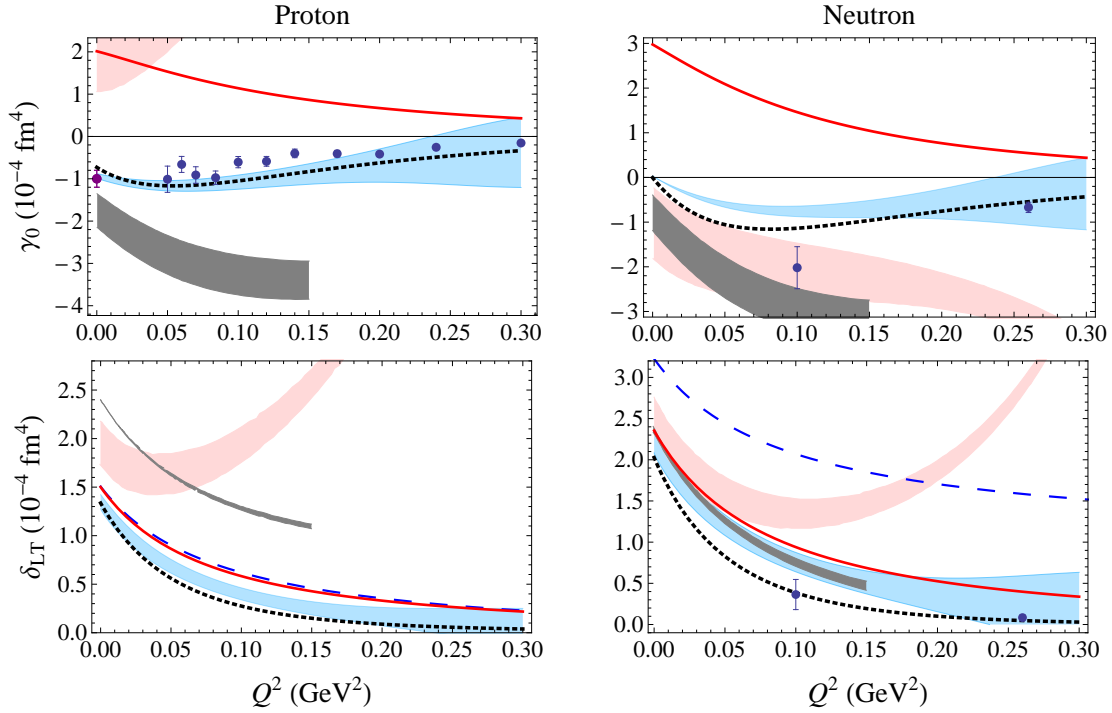
We see in this figure that, in fact, it is very important in the  $Q^2$  dependence of the combination  $\alpha_{E1} + \beta_{M1}$ , specially at low  $Q^2$ . This is not surprising, since we know that this resonance plays a very important role in  $\beta_{M1}$ . On the other hand, regarding  $\alpha_L$ , we see that the leading order is enough, in a relativistic calculation, to reproduce very well the  $Q^2$  evolution of this polarizability for both, the proton and the neutron. Notice that this is not the case in the HB approach. Therefore, the faster convergence of the relativistic approach makes an important difference in this polarizability.



**Figure 2:** Results for the scalar polarizabilities. The red solid lines and blue bands represent, respectively, the LO and the full result (with  $\Delta$ ) obtained in our calculation. The blue dashed line is the LO result in the HB limit. The black dotted lines represents the empirical result of MAID [38]. The data points at  $Q^2 = 0$  correspond to Refs [22] and [17] (red and purple point, respectively) for the proton, and [17] for the neutron. The data point in the left upper panel at  $Q^2 = 0.3 \text{ GeV}^2$  is from Ref. [18].

In the case of the spin polarizabilities, Fig. 3, one sees that the complete result (with  $\Delta$ ) agrees, in general, quite well with the MAID model and the experimental determinations. We also see the importance of the  $\Delta(1232)$  in the  $Q^2$  evolution of the forward-spin polarizability. Once this resonance is included in the calculation, the relativistic approach achieves a better description than the

infrared (red band) or heavy baryon one (out of the range of the plot). Regarding  $\delta_{LT}$  one sees that the leading order relativistic calculation already achieves a good description of this polarizability in the range of  $Q^2$  considered. Once the  $\Delta(1232)$  is included, the final result tends to the experimental as well as to the MAID results. Notice that Ref. [34] already calculated these polarizabilities at  $\mathcal{O}(\varepsilon^3)$  in the relativistic approach (grey band). While their result agrees with ours for  $\delta_{LT}^n$ , it is very different for  $\delta_{LT}^p$ . This difference can be traced back to the diagrams in which the two photons couple to an internal delta propagator [39], which is of higher order in our counting. We expect to study the impact of these higher order contributions in  $\delta_{LT}^p$  in the future. In Table 1 we summarize the results at the real photon point, and compare them with the experimental determinations or the MAID model results.



**Figure 3:** Results for the spin polarizabilities. The red solid lines and blue bands represent, respectively, the LO and the full result (with  $\Delta$ ) that we obtained. Black dotted lines represent the MAID results [38]. The grey bands are the relativistic calculation of Ref. [34]. The blue dashed line is the  $\mathcal{O}(p^4)$  HB calculation [42]; off the scale in the upper panels. The light-red band is the IR calculation [43]. The data points for the proton  $\gamma_0$  at finite  $Q^2$  are from Ref. [19] (blue dots), and at  $Q^2 = 0$  from [20] (purple square). For the neutron all the data are from Ref. [21].

### 3. The Lamb shift and the Proton Radius Puzzle

These improvements in the description of the  $Q^2$  evolution of the polarizabilities have important consequences in searches of physics beyond the standard model. To be specific, they intervene in the extraction of the proton radius through the measurement of the Lamb shift. Although for the normal hydrogen this contribution is negligible, it can play a relevant role in the case of muonic

	Proton		Neutron	
	Our work Ref. [40]	Empirical	Our work Ref. [40]	Empirical
$\alpha_{E1} + \beta_{M1}$ ( $10^{-4} \text{ fm}^3$ )	15.12(82)	13.8(4) Ref. [22]	18.30(99)	14.40(66) Ref. [17]
$\alpha_L$ ( $10^{-4} \text{ fm}^5$ )	2.31(12)	2.32 [MAID]	3.21(17)	3.32 [MAID]
$\gamma_0$ ( $10^{-4} \text{ fm}^4$ )	-0.93(5)	-1.00(8)(12) Ref. [20]	0.05(1)	-0.005 [MAID]
$\delta_{LT}$ ( $10^{-4} \text{ fm}^4$ )	1.35(7)	1.34 [MAID]	2.20(12)	2.03 [MAID]

**Table 1:** Predictions for the forward VVCS polarizabilities at the real photon point compared with the available empirical information. Where [MAID] is shown, the empirical number is provided by the MAID analysis [41, 38].

hydrogen ( $\mu H$ ), since the muon is much closer to the proton in this case, and it is much more sensitive to its internal structure. In fact, the particular features of the polarizabilities contribution to the Lamb shift make it a suitable candidate to solve the so-called "Proton Radius Puzzle". This puzzle emerges from the discrepancy between the Lamb shift measured in  $\mu H$  and the expected value based on the proton radius reported by CODATA in 2010 [44],

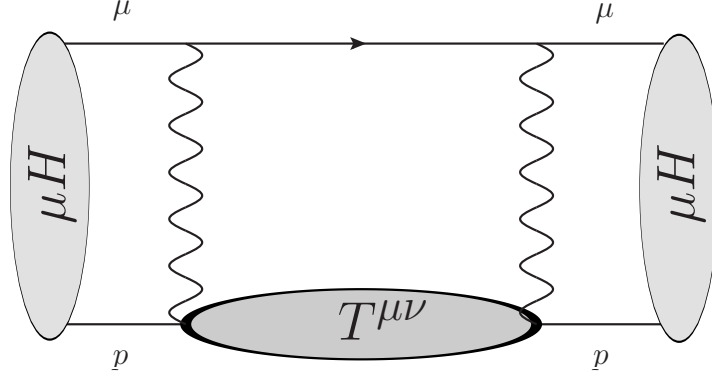
$$\Delta E_{2P-2S}^{exp} - \Delta E_{2P-2S}^{th}(r_E^{\text{CODATA}}) = 310 \mu\text{eV} \quad (3.1)$$

which has a statistical significance of about  $7\sigma$ . This difference has been attributed to a mismatch between the radius deduced in the  $\mu H$  Lamb shift measurements compared to both, the electron-proton scattering and normal hydrogen Lamb shift determinations. However, it is important to stress that recent extractions of the proton radius from modern measurements of electron-proton scattering [45] using physically constrained form factors (that incorporate analyticity, causality and crossing symmetry) reconcile the electron-proton scattering and the  $\mu H$  Lamb shift determination of the proton radius [46, 47, 48], reducing the discrepancy to  $4\sigma$ .

One possible missing (or underestimated) piece of information could come from the polarizabilities of the proton. In Fig. 4 we show the two-photon exchange corrections to which the polarizabilities contribute.

The polarizabilities contribution starts at  $\mathcal{O}(\alpha_{em}^5)$ . At this order, one can consider forward kinematics for the Compton subprocess, since off-forward contributions are suppressed by  $\alpha_{em}$ . This allows us to use the results of the previous section to compute the leading-order prediction of the polarizabilities contribution to the  $\mu H$  Lamb shift. It is simple to show that the effect of this correction to the Lamb shift can be well approximated by (see Ref. [11])

$$\Delta E_{2S}^{pol} \approx \frac{\alpha_{em}}{\pi} \phi_{n=2}^2 \int_0^\infty \frac{dQ}{Q^2} w\left(\frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2}\right) \left[ T_1^{(NB)}(0, Q^2) - T_2^{(NB)}(0, Q^2) \right], \quad w(x) = \sqrt{1+x} - \sqrt{x}, \quad (3.2)$$



**Figure 4:** Two photon exchange corrections to the  $\mu H$ . The  $T^{\mu\nu}$  symbolizes the Compton tensor.

	Pachucki	Marty- nenko	Nevado & Pineda	Carlson & Vanderhaeghen	Birse & McGovern	Gorchtein <i>et al.</i>	This work	Peset & Pineda
( $\mu\text{eV}$ )	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[9]	[10]	[11]	[12]
$\Delta E_{2S}^{(\text{pol})}$	-12(2)	-11.5	-18.5	-7.4(2.4)	-8.5(1.1)	-15.3(5.6)	$-8.2^{(+1.2)}_{(-2.5)}$	-26.5

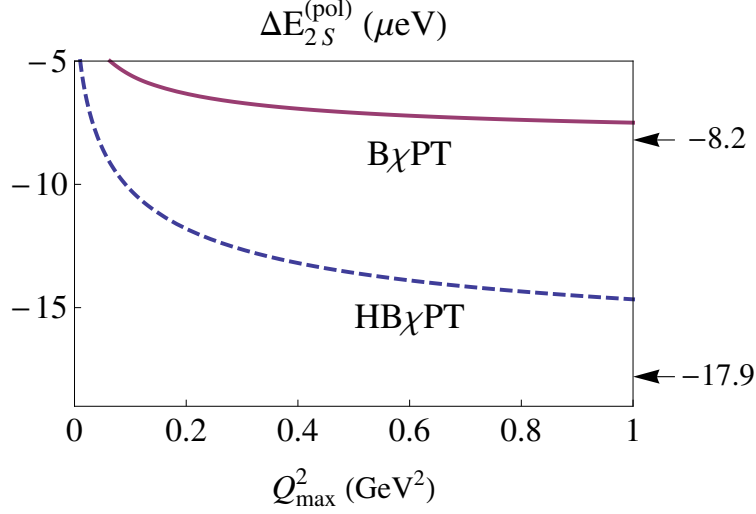
**Table 2:** Summary of the different determinations of the polarizability correction to the  $\mu H$  Lamb shift.

where  $\phi_{n=2}$  is the wave function of the  $\mu H$  at the origin,  $m_\ell$  is the mass of the lepton (muon), and  $T_1^{(NB)}$  and  $T_2^{(NB)}$  stand for the non-Born part of  $T_1$  and  $T_2$ , defined from the spin-independent part of the Compton tensor in the following way

$$T^{\mu\nu}(P, q) = \left( -g^{\mu\nu} + \frac{q^\mu q^\nu}{q^2} \right) T_1(v, Q^2) + \frac{1}{M_N^2} \left( P^\mu - \frac{P \cdot q}{q^2} q^\mu \right) \left( P^\nu - \frac{P \cdot q}{q^2} q^\nu \right) T_2(v, Q^2). \quad (3.3)$$

Even though this integral extends to regions of  $Q^2$  to which chiral EFT is not applicable, it is important to notice that, for high  $Q^2$ , the contribution of  $T_1$  and  $T_2$  is suppressed by the weighting function  $w(\tau_\ell)$ . In fact, in Ref. [11] it was proved that this integral converges quickly to its asymptotic value (i. e., when the upper limit  $Q_{max}^2 = \infty$ ) in the low  $Q^2$  region when using the relativistic approach. However, this is not the case for the heavy baryon formulation, that exhibits a much slower convergence. This is shown in Fig. 5 by plotting the relativistic and HB results as a function of  $Q_{max}^2$ . While at  $Q^2 \sim 0.2 \text{ GeV}^2$  already the relativistic approach gives a result compatible, within the expected systematic error, with the asymptotic value, the HB one does not, even at large  $Q^2$  ( $\sim 1 \text{ GeV}^2$ ).

In Table 2 we summarize the results for  $\Delta E_{2S}^{(\text{pol})}$  available in the literature. Most of them are based on dispersive approaches, that employ experimental information. Only [6], [11], [12] are chiral *predictions*. Among them, only the relativistic approach gives a result,  $\Delta E_{2S}^{(\text{pol})} = -8.2^{(+1.2)}_{(-2.5)} \mu\text{eV}$  [11], compatible with the preferred value nowadays,  $\Delta E_{2S}^{(\text{pol})} = -8.5(1.1) \mu\text{eV}$  [7, 9]. Although this contribution is one order of magnitude smaller than required to explain the Proton Radius Puzzle, this beautiful agreement between the chiral prediction and phenomenological extractions helps in establishing the size and uncertainty of  $\Delta E_{2S}^{(\text{pol})}$  on EFT grounds.



**Figure 5:** Result of the integral in Eq. (3.2) as a function of its upper limit,  $Q_{max}^2$ .

#### 4. Summary and conclusions

We have shown that a relativistic formulation of chiral EFT for baryons with  $\Delta$  degrees of freedom achieves a better description of the lowest order scalar and spin polarizabilities of the nucleon at low  $Q^2$ . These improvements are important in order to understand the properties of the nucleon on QCD grounds, as well as for experimental investigations of the spin structure of the nucleon [49]. Our better knowledge of the electromagnetic response of the nucleon is also relevant in experimental searches of physics beyond the standard model in the low-energy frontier. Here we have shown how the Compton tensor calculated to extract the polarizabilities, also leads to a value of  $\Delta E_{2S}^{(pol)}$  that turns out to be in excellent agreement with the phenomenological extractions [7, 9], that are mostly based on experimental information. This agreement helps to establish the contribution of  $\Delta E_{2S}^{(pol)}$  to the measurement of the proton radius on chiral symmetry grounds.

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