



Folk costumes in the Czech Republic

In Central Europe, a “folk costume” means a historical garment worn by peasants. In the Czech Republic, we are able to follow the development of peasant clothing roughly from the 17th century.

During the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century the traditional folk costumes were gradually discarded and faded away.

The Czech Republic can be characterized by a great variety of folk costume regions. There are many reasons for this, but we can consider the relative isolation and immobility of respective population groups as the most decisive.

The peasants were, due to the rules of serfdom (until 1781) and subsequently servitude (until 1848), legally bound with land and could not move elsewhere.

These circumstances led to the gradual creation of unique folk custom types, characteristic for each region. Each region had different conditions as to accessible technologies, materials, inherited customs, relative poverty or wealth, and differed as an environment for local human invention and creativity. In Bohemia the costume borders were dominantly formed by domain frontiers, in Moravia by parishes.

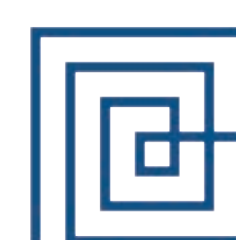
In most of the Czech Republic, the tradition of folk costumes reached its peak in the second half of the 19th century.

The said variety could be found in accessories, shoes, jewellery but also in architecture, every-day life items, tools and immaterial expressions like music, songs, dances, fairy tales, festivities, folklore.

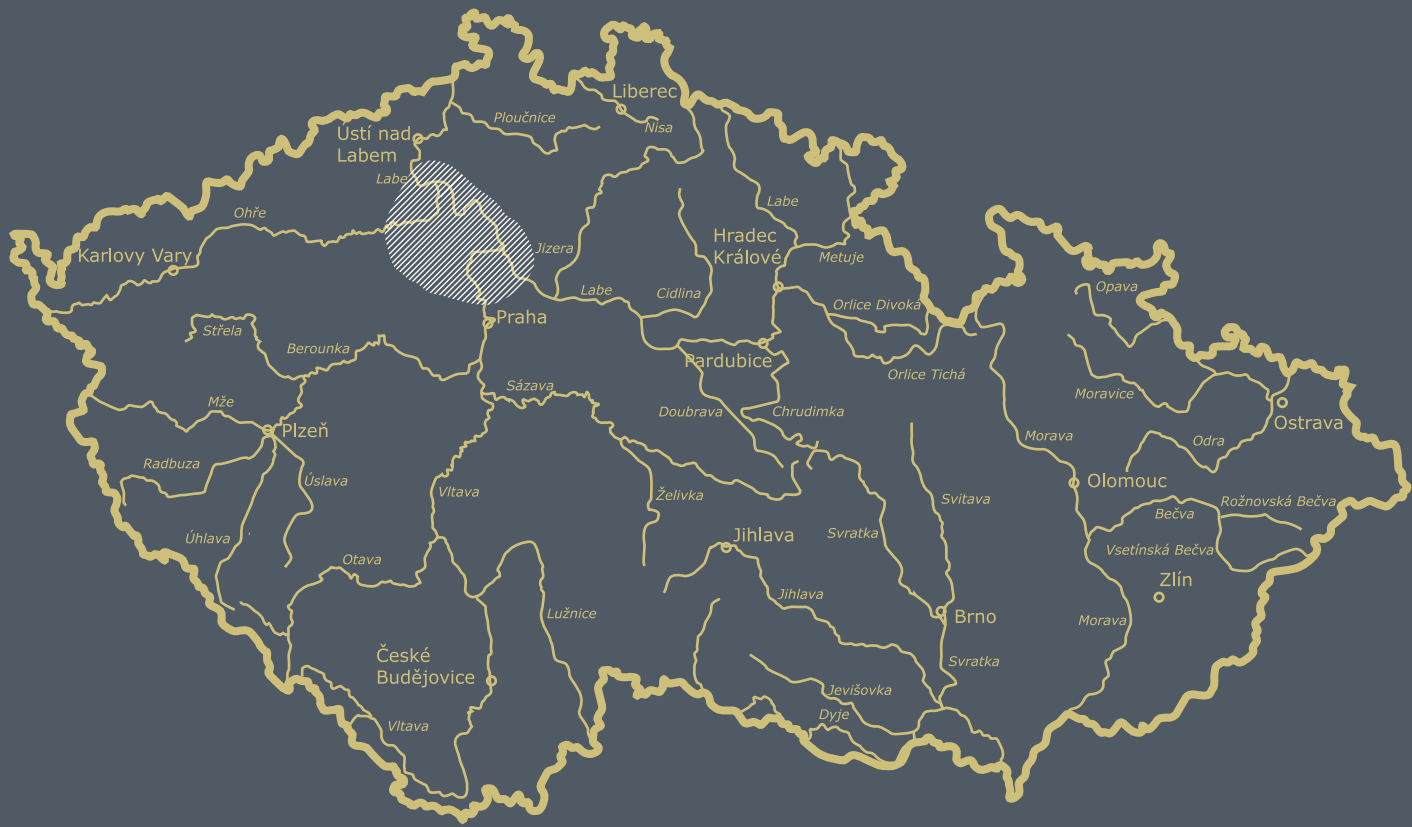
When arriving to the Czech Republic, you can find folk costumes in many places until today.

People (in Moravia more than Bohemia) have a very fond relationship with their costumes. It is not unusual to find people still proudly wearing their traditional folk costumes during local festivities, weddings, holidays, festivals etc., thus expressing pride in their roots.

We have prepared a selection of folk costumes from Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia so that you can, albeit on a very limited example of 16 regions (from the total number of approximately 100), admire the beauty, ingenuity and dignity of our ancestors.



PODŘIPSKO



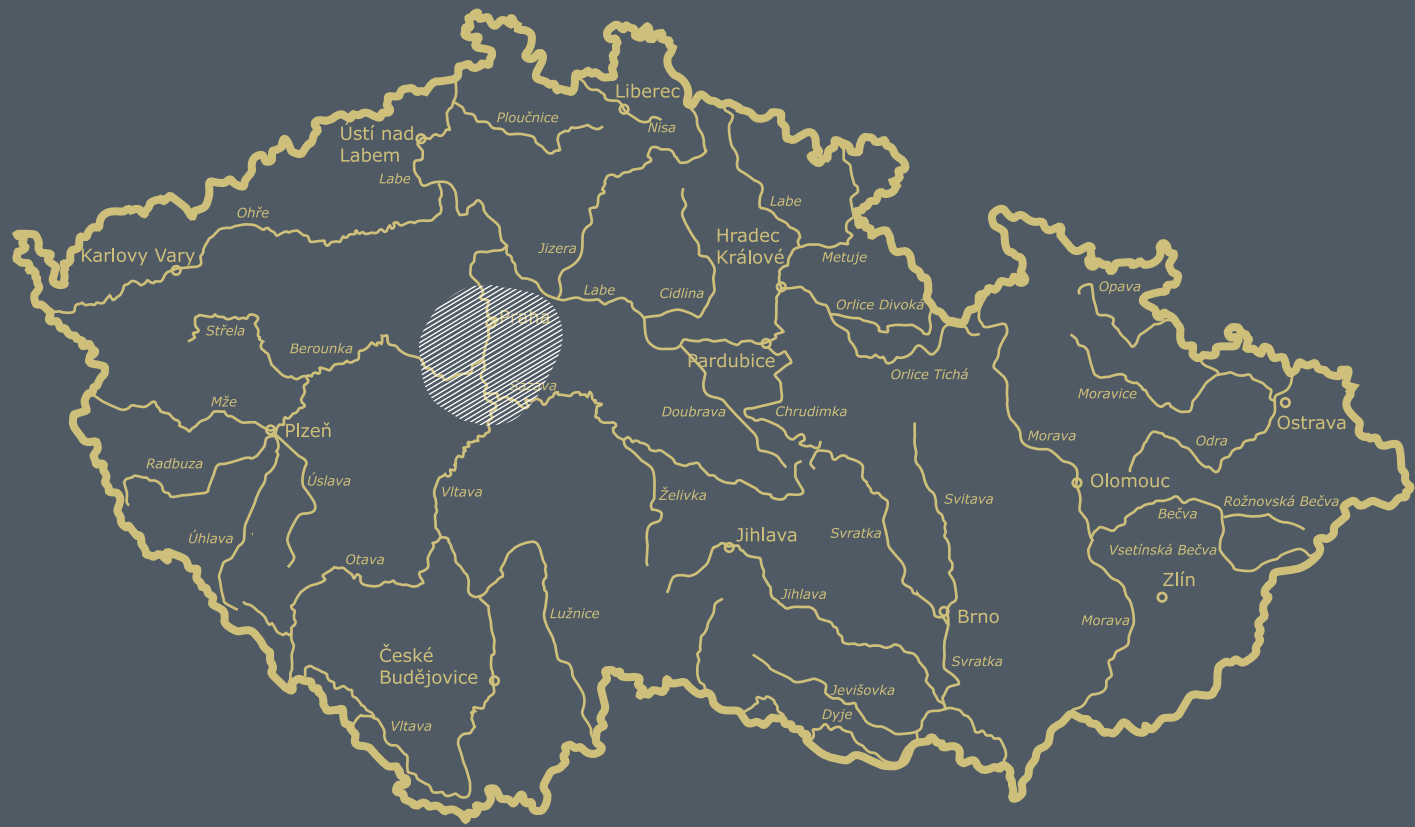
Podřipsko folk costume region



Podřipsko region

Podřipsko surrounds Mt. Říp and belongs to wider central-Bohemian costume family. It lies on the north-west of Prague, in lowlands created by the river Labe. Podřipsko is one of the regions where the costumes were discarded very soon (as first in the Czech Rep., in fact), at the beginning of the 19th century. As local farmers grew richer thanks to fertile soil, they quickly adopted elements from urban and even aristocratic garments.

PRAŽSKO



● Pražsko folk costume region

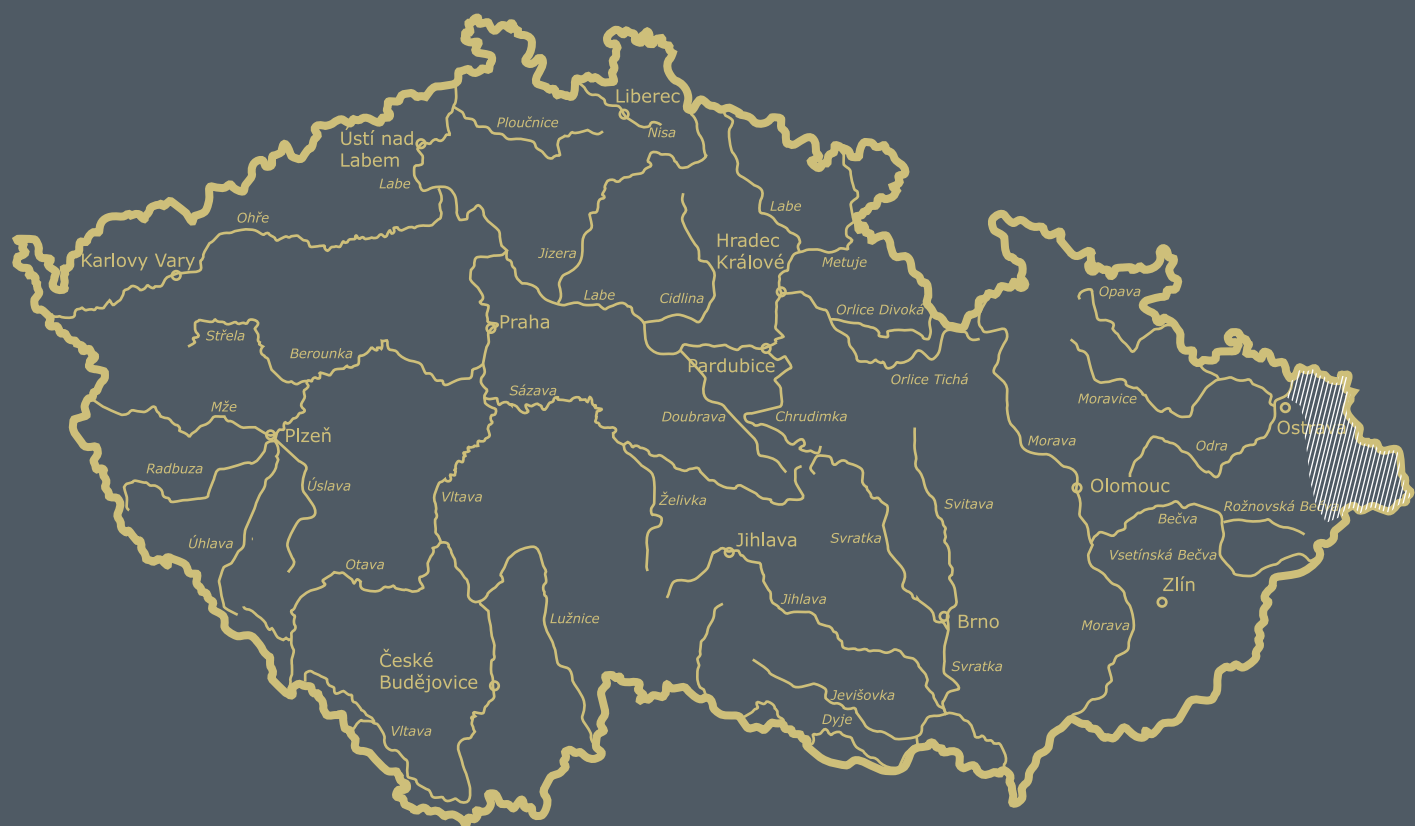


Pražsko region

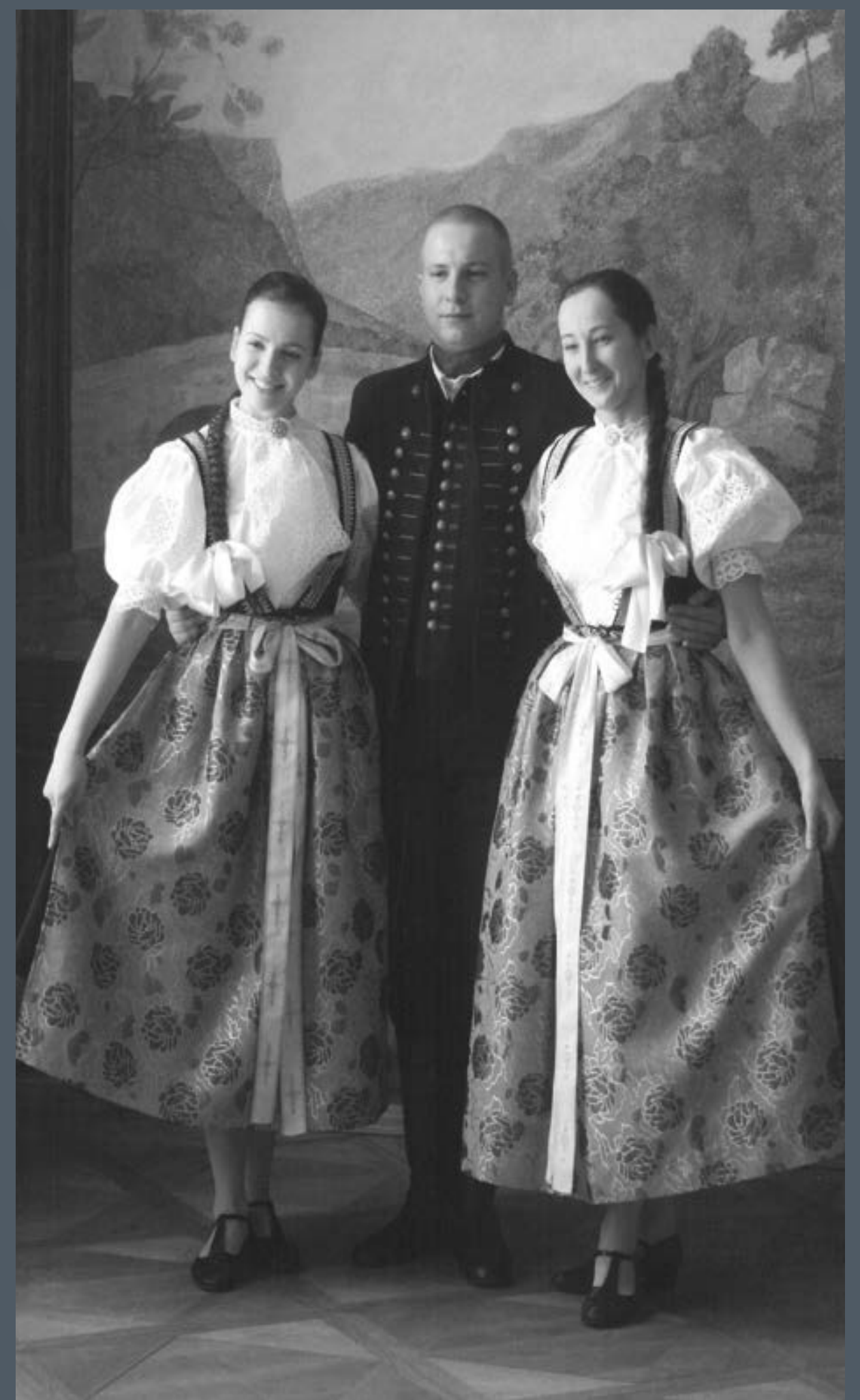
Wide outskirts of Prague – Pražsko – is a specific folk costume region strongly affected by the proximity of the city. It is almost impossible to state the region's borders because it blended smoothly with its neighbours. With just a few exceptions, the costumes here were gone in the first half of the 19th century. Only in some villages, for instance Smíchov and Ruzyně, which are both part of Prague today, costumes held on for longer.

Festive women's costumes were characterized by the so-called "golden caps", decorated with metal threads, and often Czech garnets, sequins, little beads etc.

TEŠÍNSKO



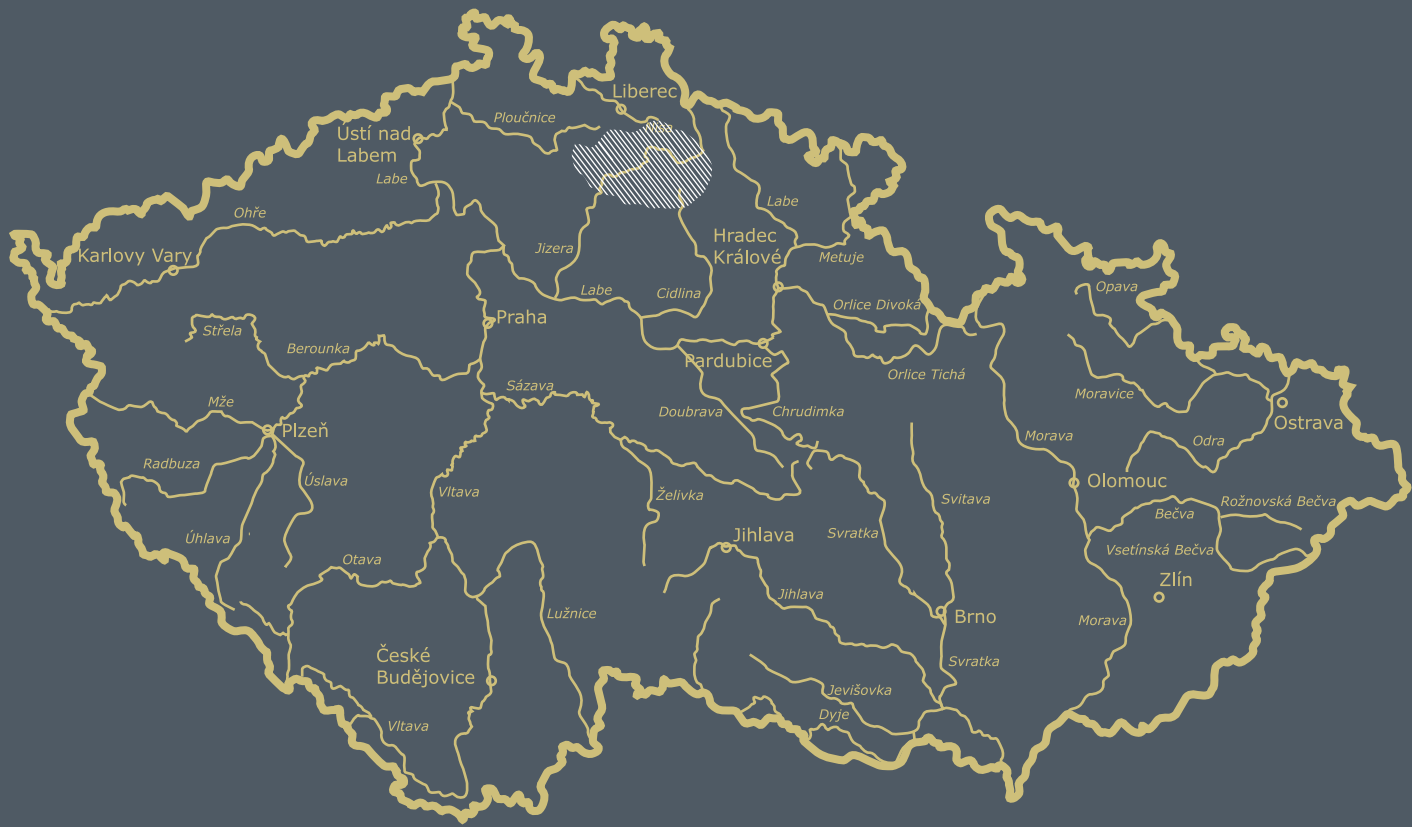
● Těšínské Slezsko folk costume region



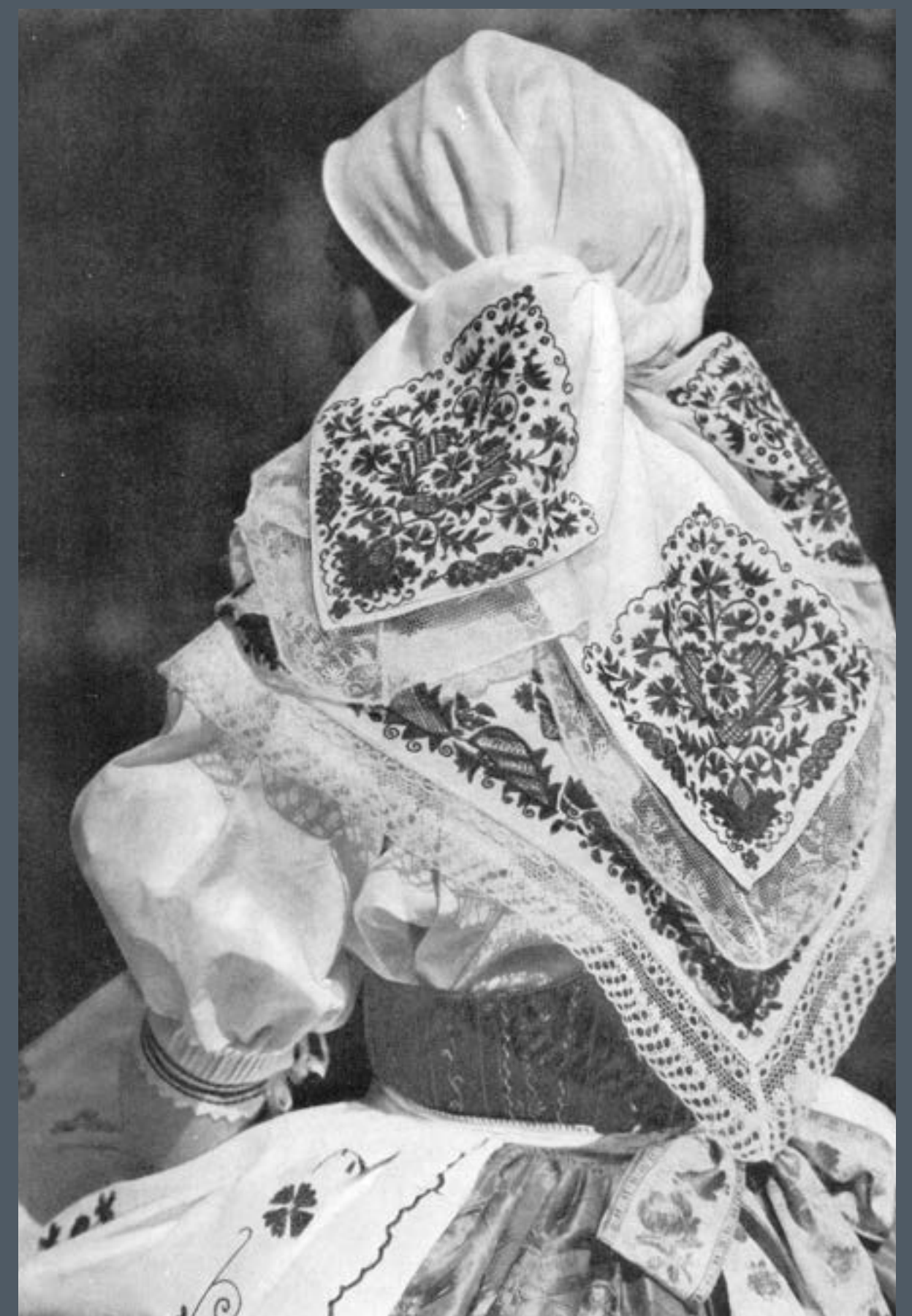
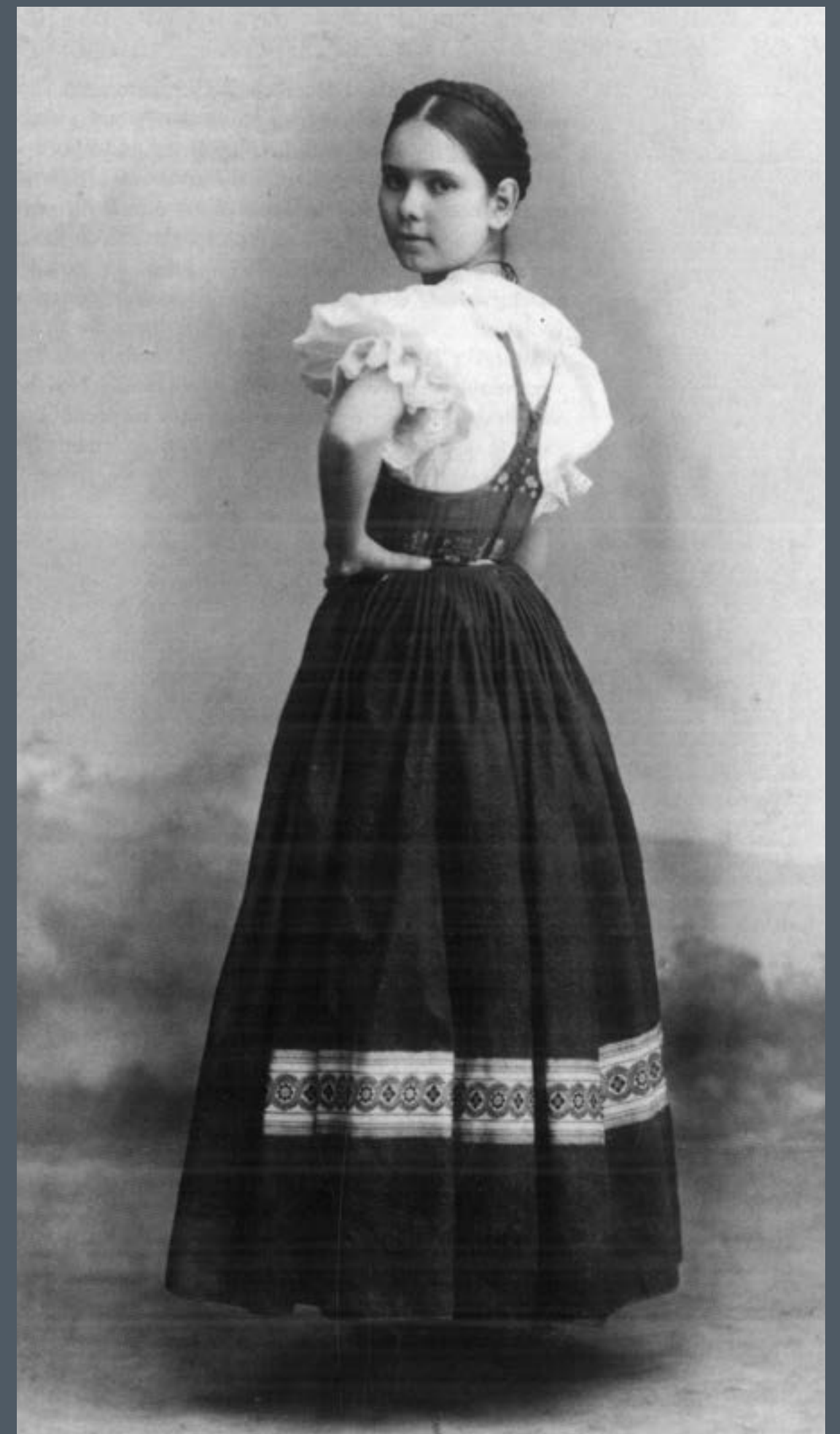
Těšínské Slezsko region

Until the beginning of the 20th century, Těšínské Slezsko was part of the so-called Austrian Silesia and therefore is, up until now, influenced by the neighbouring area of today's Poland. The location on the confines of Poland, Slovakia and Bohemia leads to mixed influences. This results in different costume parts and aspects, specific for the mountain inhabitants or for Polish settlers in Jablunkov and for Silesian type costumes elsewhere. Women's costumes are characterized by typical silver jewellery sets – drapes, necklaces, brooches, belts.

TURNOVSKO



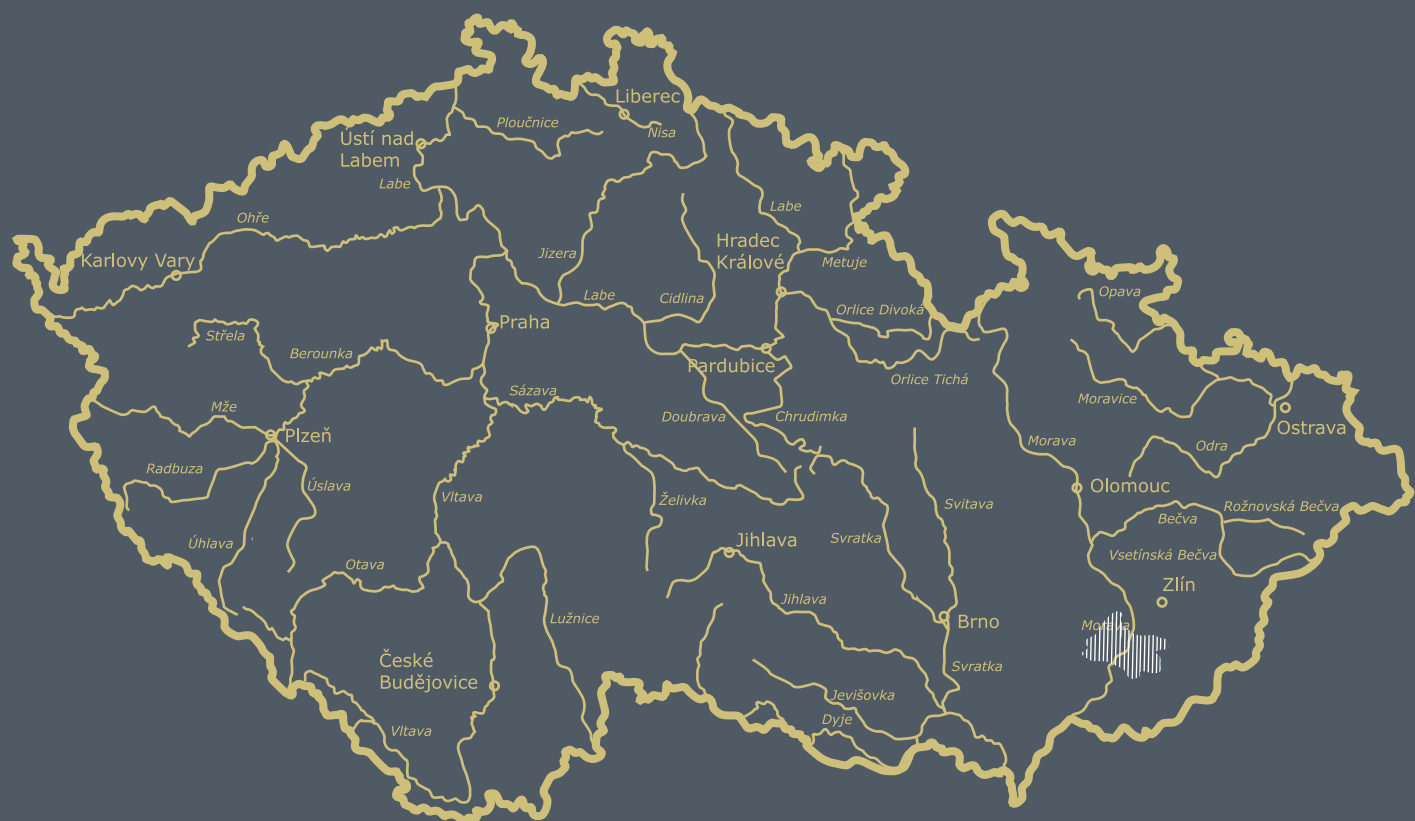
Turnovsko folk costume region



Turnovsko region

Turnovsko folk costume region is part of the wider area of Pojizeří in northern Bohemia and is, geographically, almost identical with Český Ráj (the so-called "Czech Paradise" – a well-known and well-loved natural park). It is hard to find distinct borders between costumes of this region and its neighbours, the regions of Mladoboleslavsko to the south and Podještědí to the north. Typical for local women's festive costumes were splendid bobbin lace and carmine embroidery on scarves. Later also beautiful headbands.

UHERSKOHRADIŠŤSKO



Uherskohradištsko folk costume region

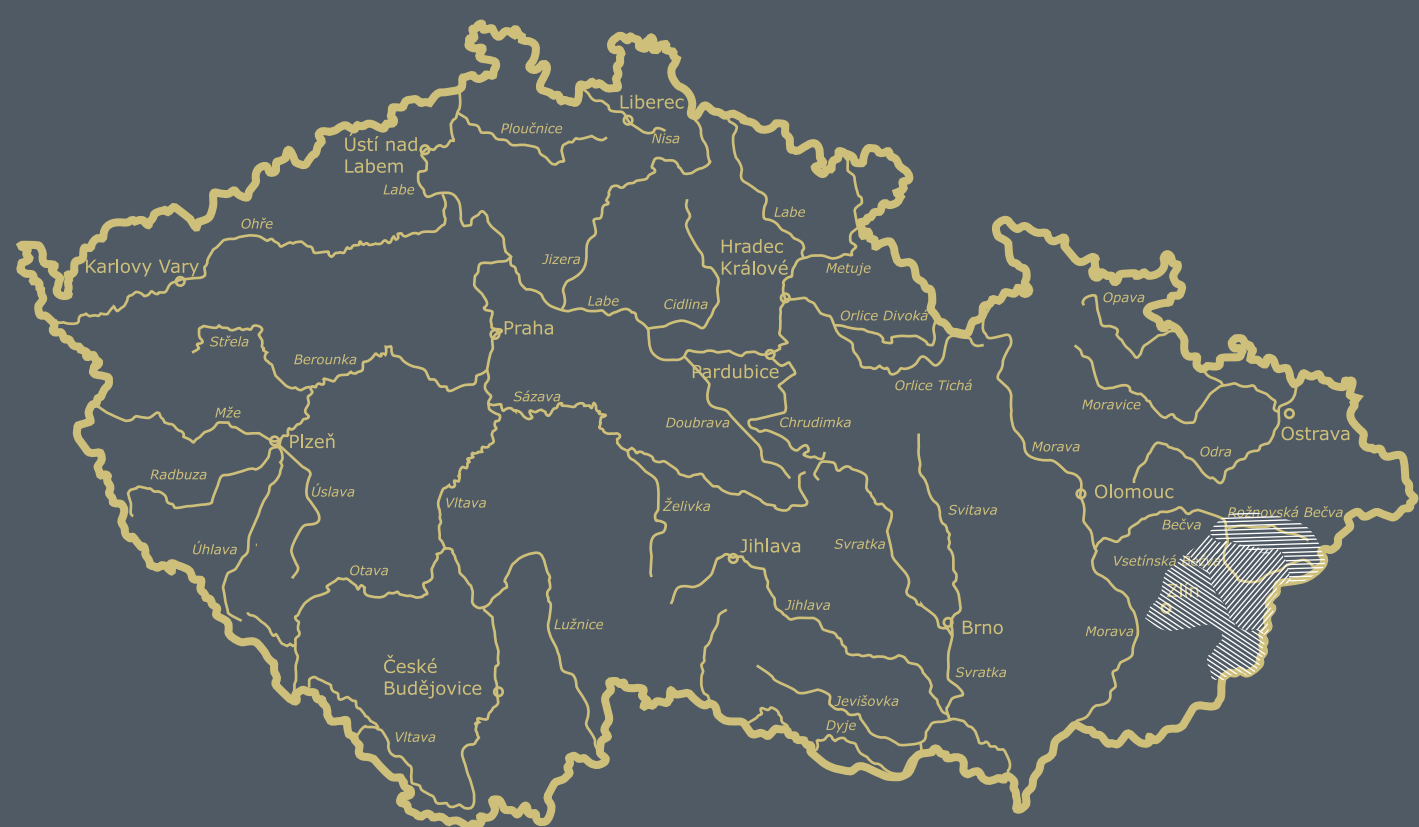


 MUZEUM
„OSTROV LIDOVÝCH KROJŮ“

Uherskohradištsko region

The Uherskohradištsko region lies in the southeast of Moravia and is part of Moravian Slovakia. This area is famous for its traditions, customs, music, dances, songs, dialect and folk costumes. All these aspects make it one of the most popular and renowned ethnographic regions. The picture depicts folk costumes from Kunovice. They are very attractive thanks to their embroidery, lace, colours and elegant silhouette.

WALLACHIA



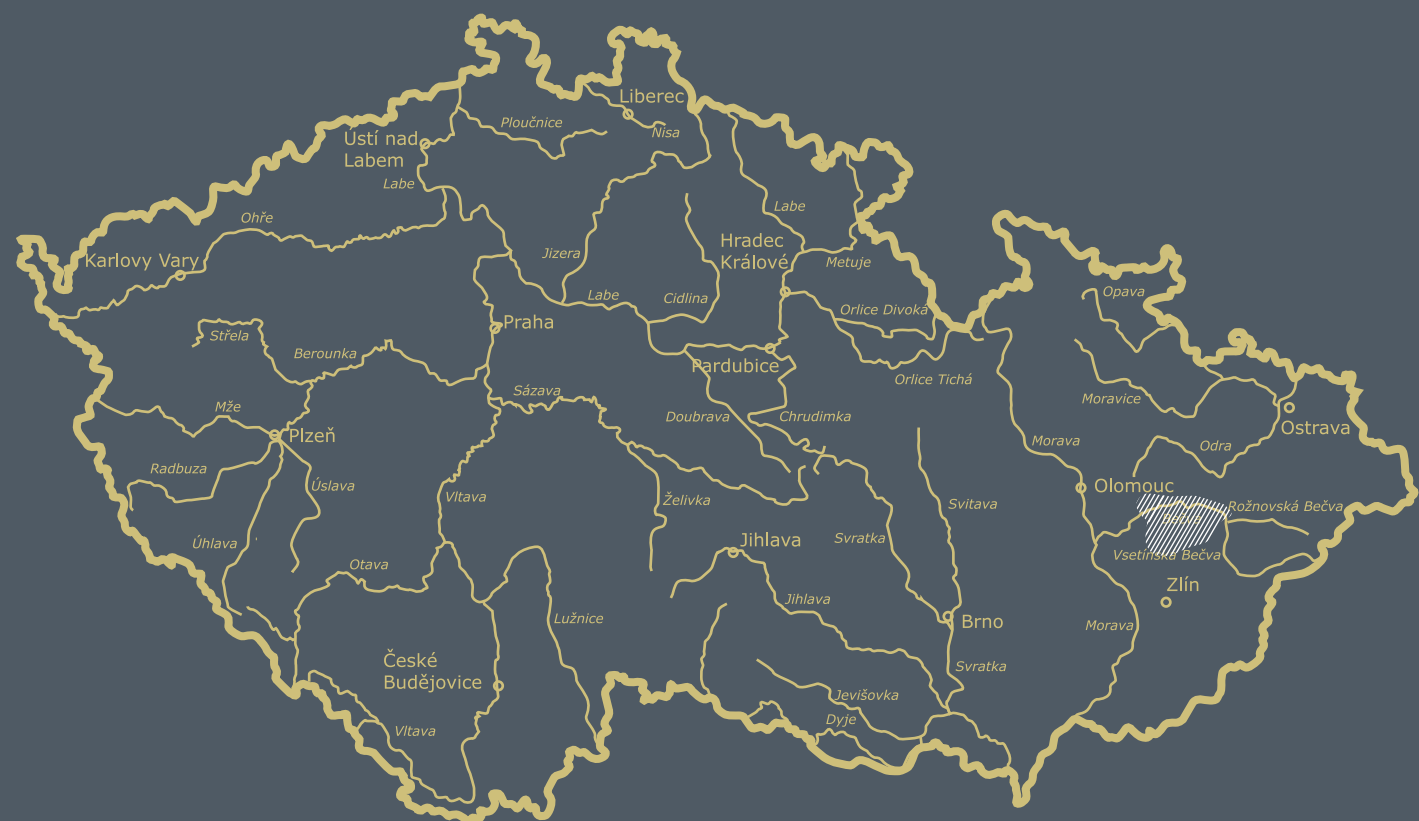
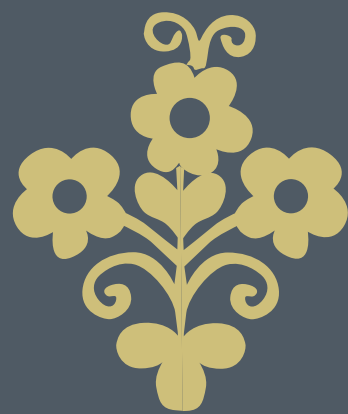
Wallachia folk costume region



Wallachia region

On the eastern border of Moravia, in a poor mountainous region of Beskydy lies Valašsko (Wallachia). Local people made a living of pasture land and forestry. Home weaving and making clothes, even shoes and fur coats, was an everyday reality here much longer than in wealthier parts of the country. Common usage of folk costumes was also maintained, especially by women. Local garments had some archaic aspects that can be traced back to ancient times.. Leather shoes, a specific type of moccasins, men's wide hats and long small axes called "valaška" were characteristic. Wallachian folk costume is modest but practical and charming.

HOSTÝNSKÉ ZÁHOŘÍ



● Hostýnské Záhoří folk costume region

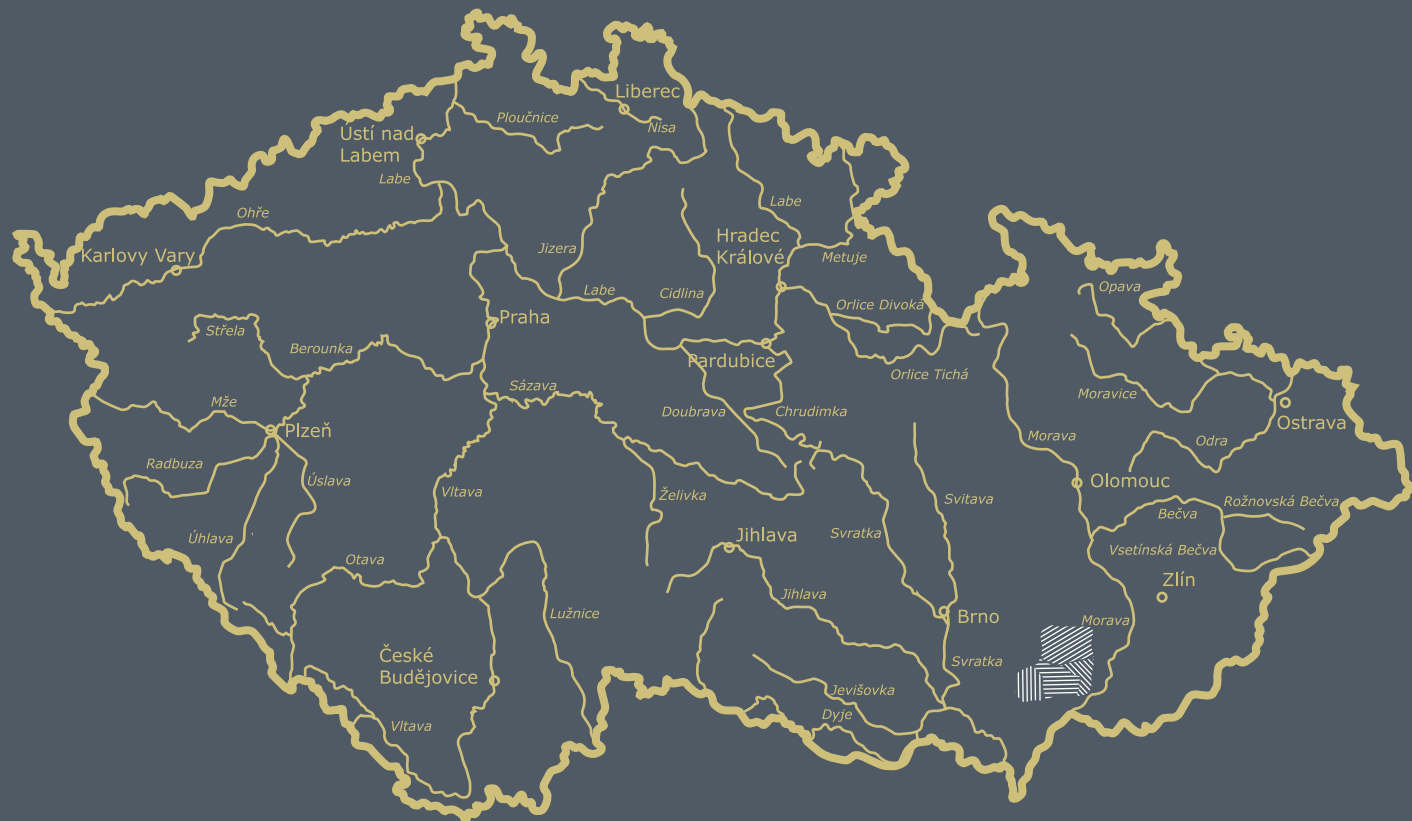


Hostýnské Záhoří region

Folk costume region Hostýnské Záhoří lies along the middle reaches of the river Bečva in what is called the Moravian Gate. Since prehistorical times, this area has served as a corridor between Northern and Eastern Europe. This led to absorption of some aspects from fertile Haná but also mountainous Wallachia in the local folk costume. Such inspirations and influences helped in development of restrained and modest, yet beautifully embroidered and laced costume. Women used specific ribbons and specially tied scarfs.

MORAVIAN SLOVAKIA

SOUTH KYJOVIAN FOLK COSTUME



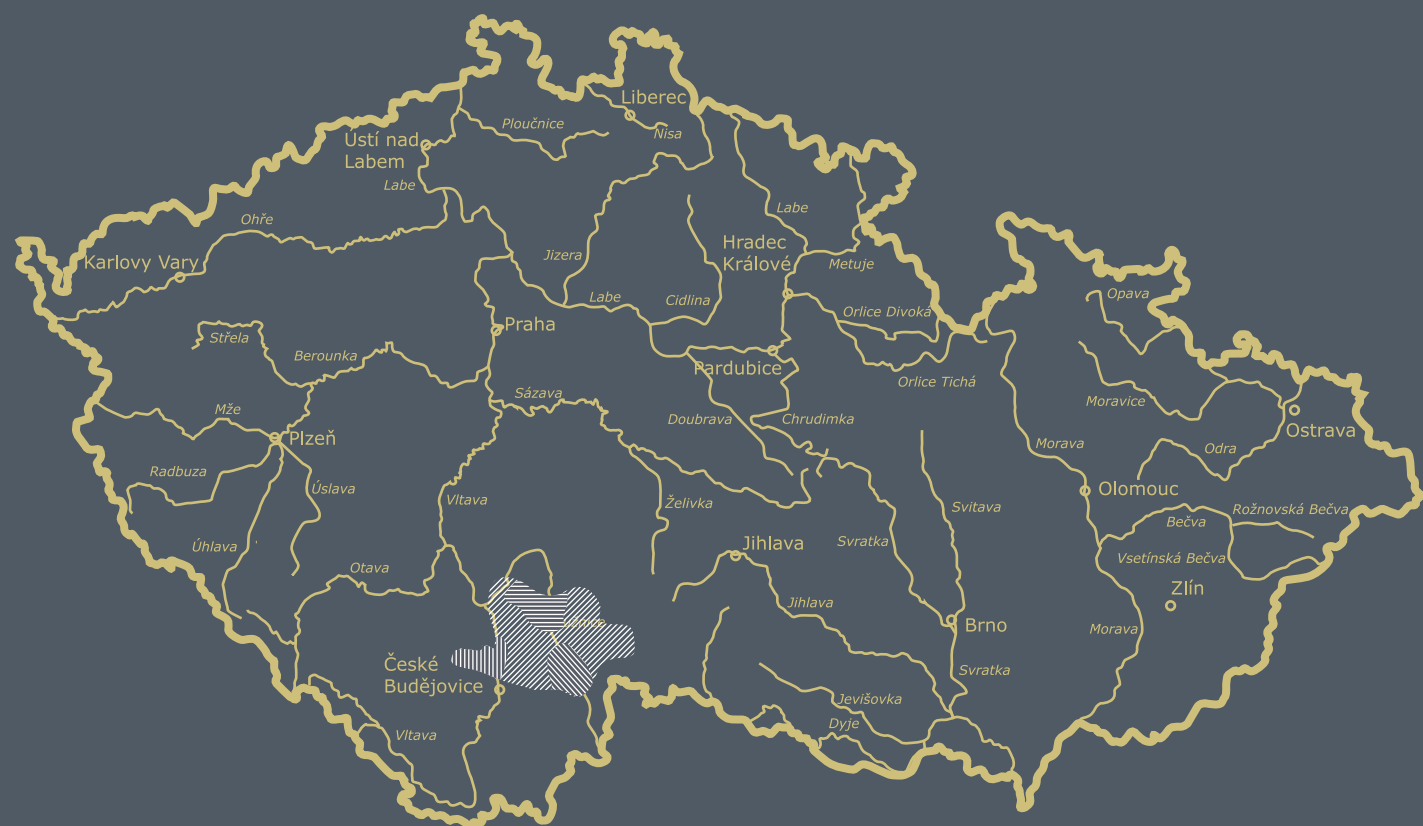
● Moravian Slovakia folk costume region



Region: Moravian Slovakia
South Kyjovian folk costume

Moravian Slovakia is the most famous and most distinctive folk costume region in the Czech Republic. In the 20th century, the Kyjovian (Kyjov is one of the region's centres) costume became a symbol of festive rural costume, not only in Moravia, but also in many Czech parts of the country. Even Moravian Slovakian songs, dances, music, customs and festivities are well renowned.

BLATA



● Blata folk costume region

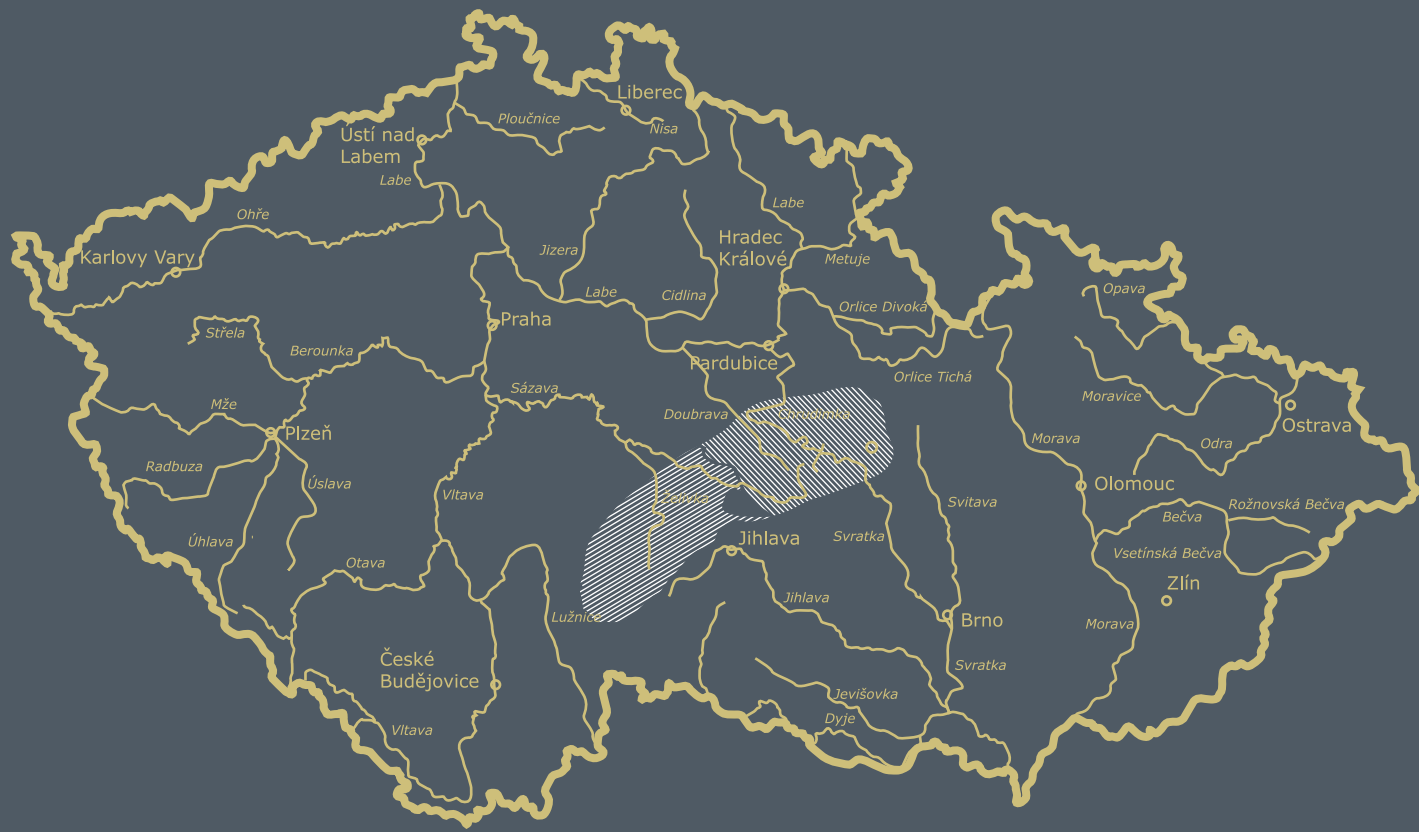


Blata region

The region of Blata folk costume is located in South Bohemia, northeast of České Budějovice, between Třeboň and Soběslav. Blata is a part of the South Bohemian region, which is famous for its many fishponds and rustic baroque architecture. Thanks to the combination of embroidery and beads, lace and special applications made of fish scales, and also thanks to gentle colouring and graceful silhouette, the women folk costumes of Blata are considered the most beautiful of Czech folk costumes.

BOHEMIAN HORÁCKO

FOLK COSTUME OF POLIČKA



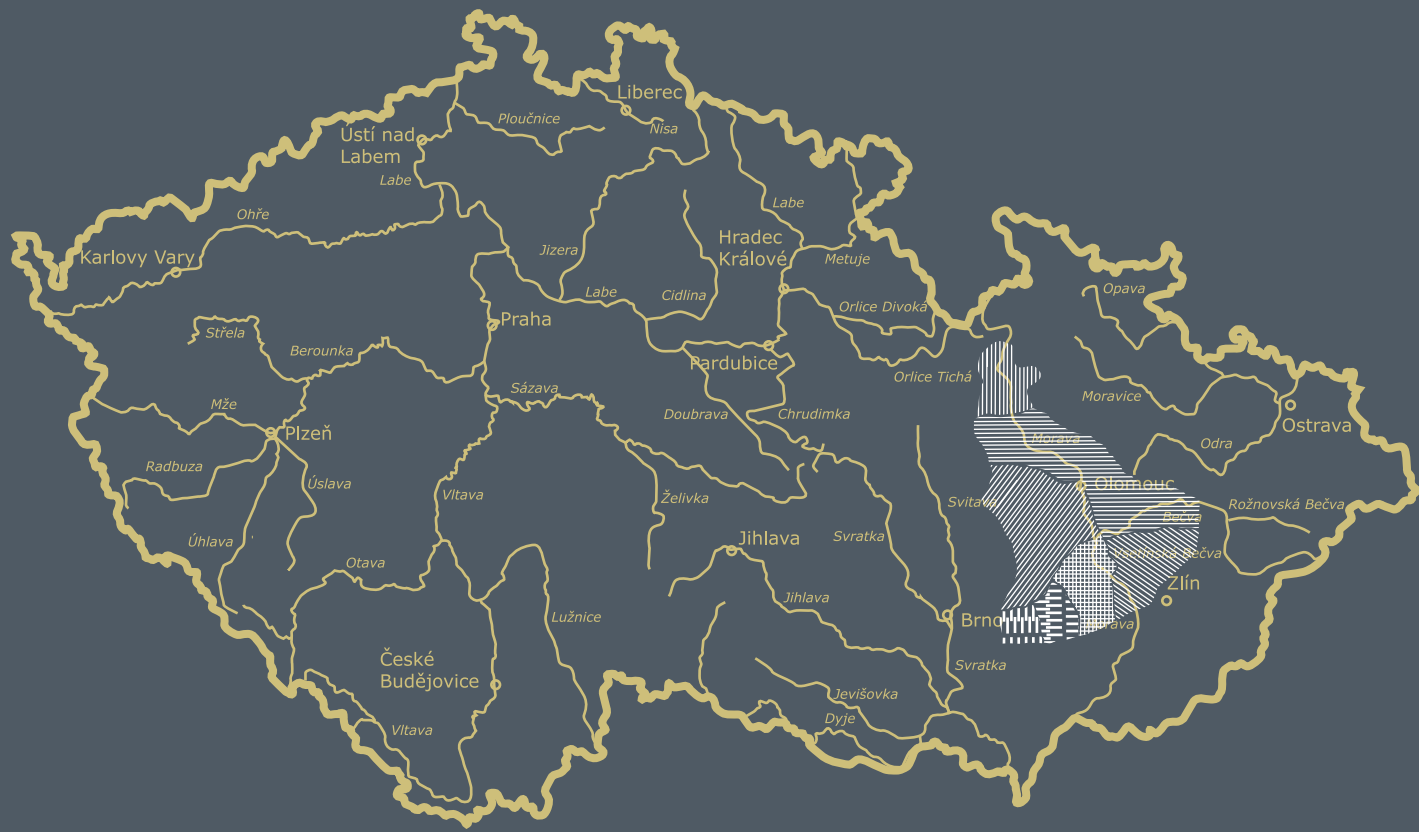
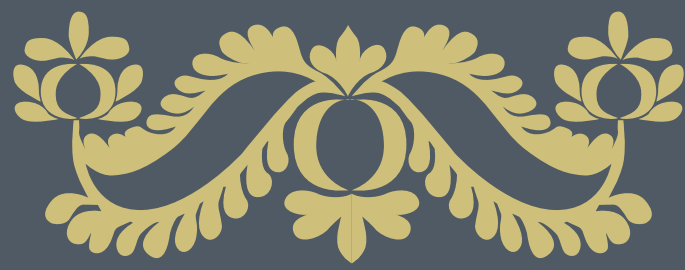
Bohemian Horácko folk costume region



Region: Bohemian Horácko
Folk costume of Polička

Bohemian Horácko lies in the centre of the Czech Republic as a part of Bohemian – Moravian Highlands. The folk costume of Polička is a good representative of north-eastern part of the region, which is characterized by a temperate charm of coloured lace, embroidery and both women's and men's costume silhouette. Horácko was one of the poorer regions. One can feel and appreciate a certain conservativeness, stressed moderateness and usage of home-produced materials in the costume.

HANÁ



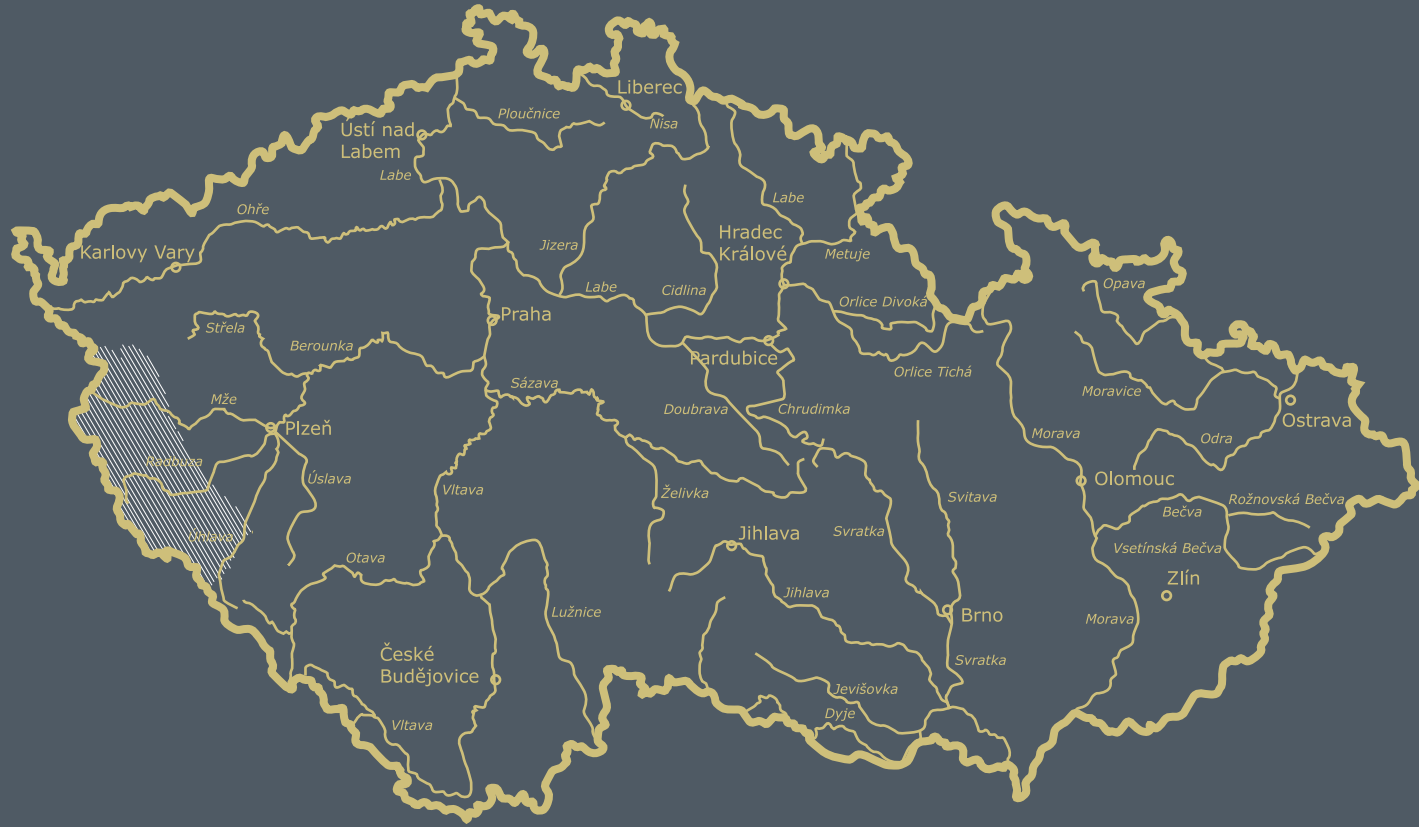
● Haná folk costume region



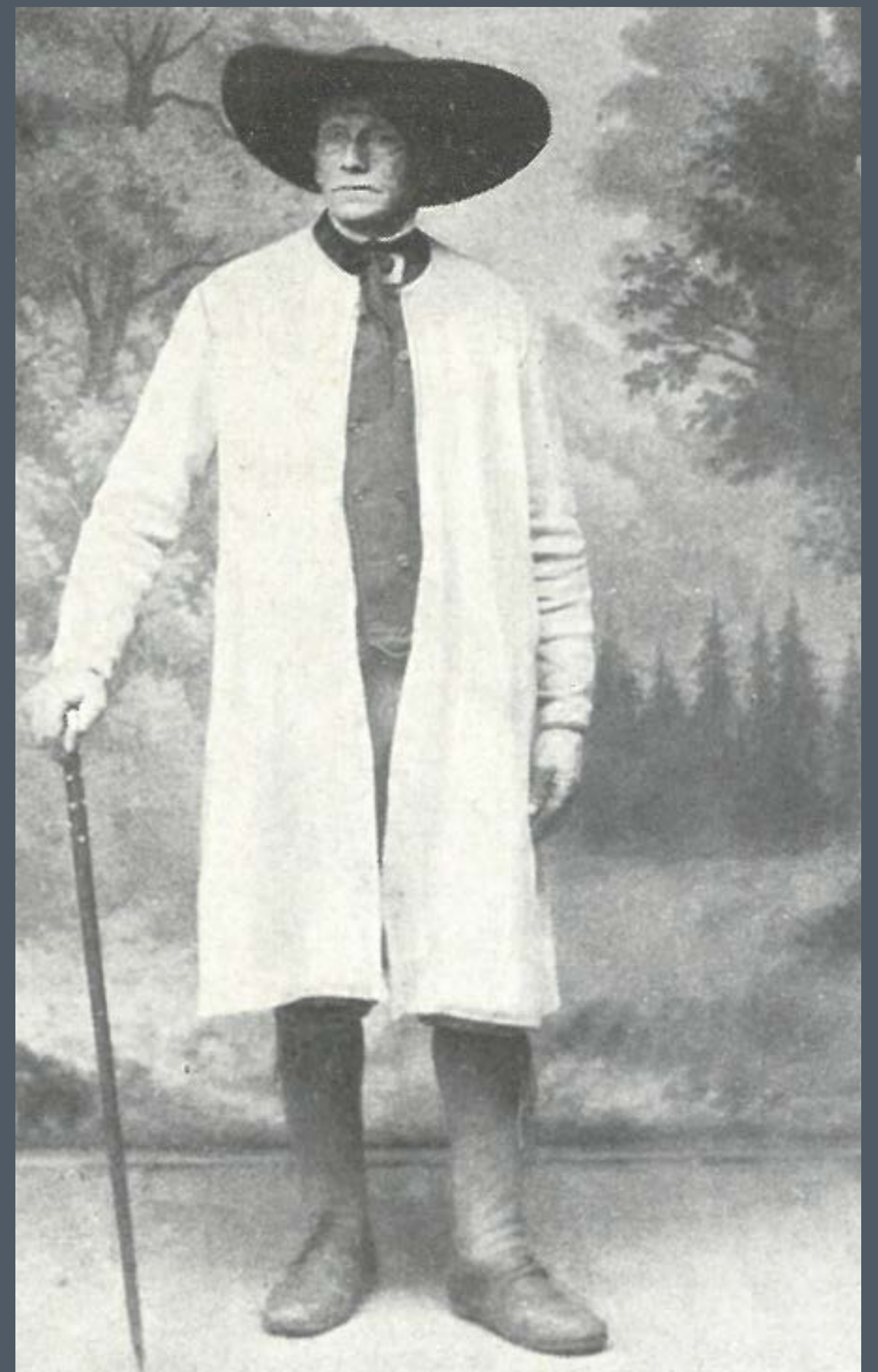
Haná region

Haná region lies in the middle of Moravia, in its most fertile part where the rivers Morava, Bečva and Haná created flood plains. Local folk costumes tell the tale of good prosperity and wealthy rural farms at first sight. Both men's and women's folk costumes are made of costly materials, applications, ribbons, embroidery and lace. These folk costumes are probably the most expensive in the Czech Republic. The wealth of the region led, as in other richer areas, to the gradual discarding of folk costumes already in the first half of the 19th century.

CHODSKO



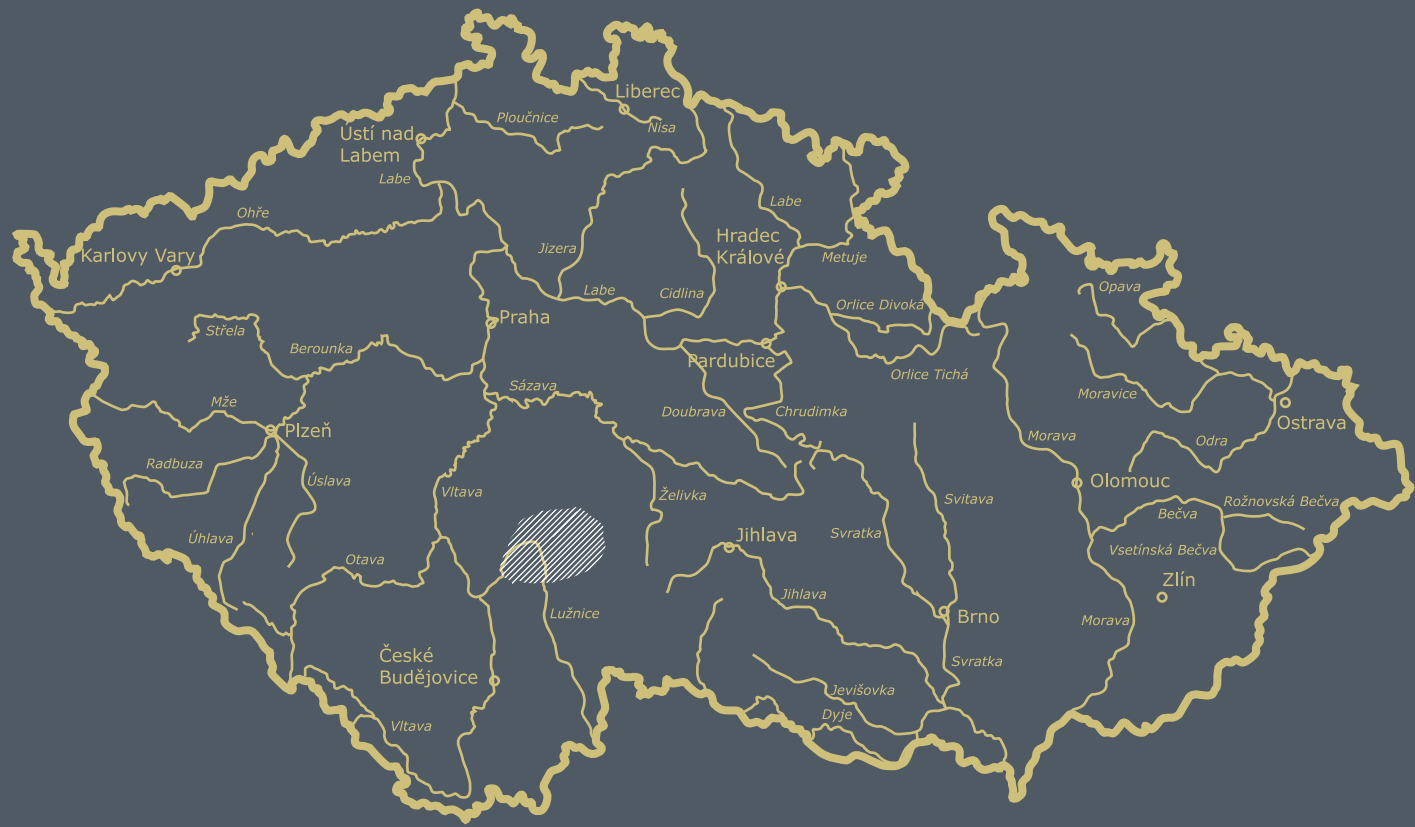
● Chodsko folk costume region



Chodsko region

Chodsko is situated on the south-western border of Bohemia. Since the Middle Ages, the „Chods“ have been perceived as guardians of the borders formed by deep forests on the frontier between Bohemia and Bavaria. Thanks to this exceptional role, they found their way to Czech history and mythical stories. They became the heroes of Czech belles-letters, musical and other artistic works. Chodsko is the most significant folk costume area in Bohemia, where costumes were worn longest.

KOZÁCKO

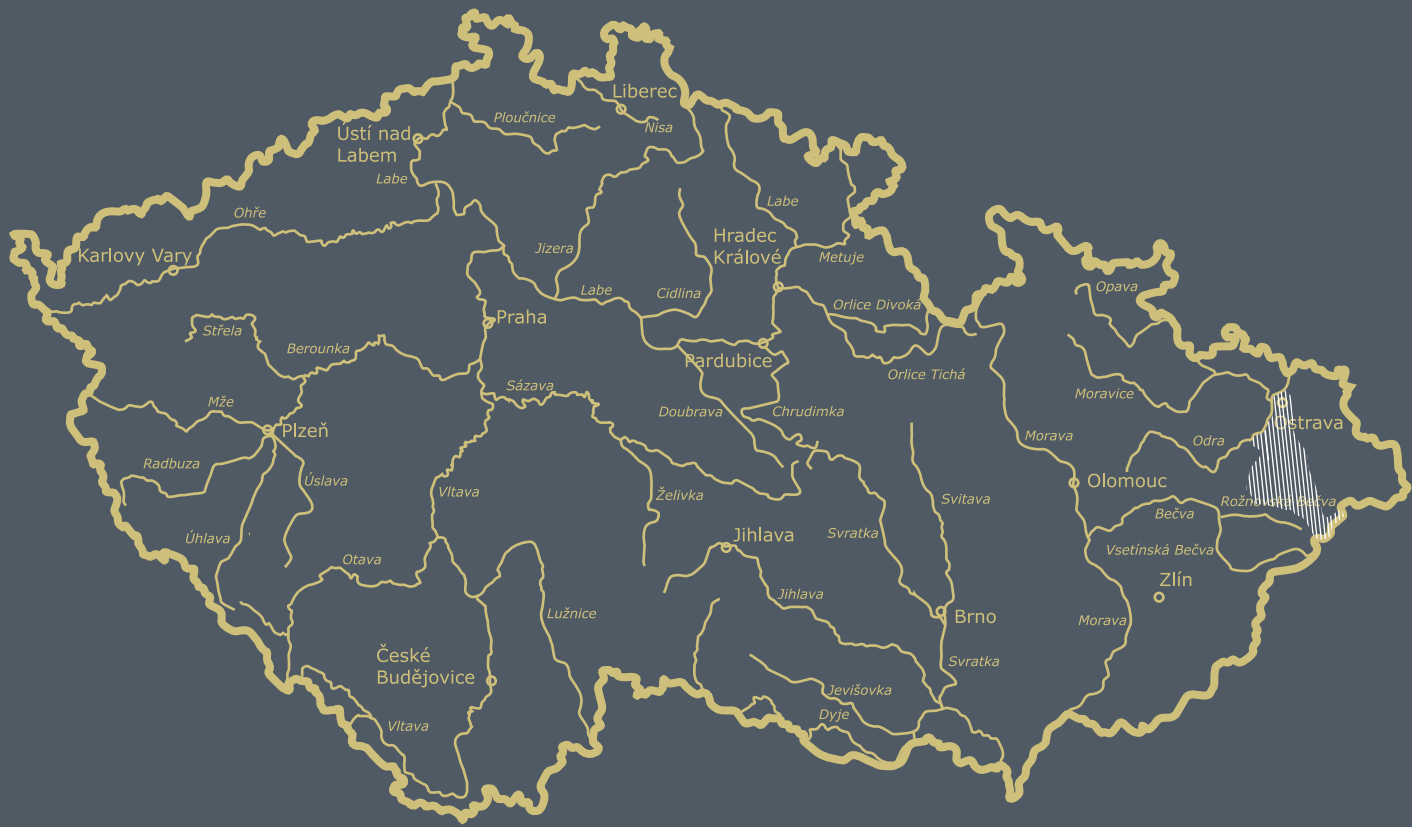


● Kozácko folk costume region



Kozácko region

The folk costume region Kozácko encompasses the wider outskirts of the town Tábor, which lies on the border between central and south Bohemia. The name "Kozácko" originated as a gibe – the relatively poor people of this region could only afford to keep goats ("koza" in Czech) instead of cows. Women's festive costume is prominent and characterized by a typical kind of embroidery, mostly on aprons. These were called "winding paths". The folk costume of Kozácko represents some of the demure, elegant and graceful south Bohemian costumes.



Laško folk costume region

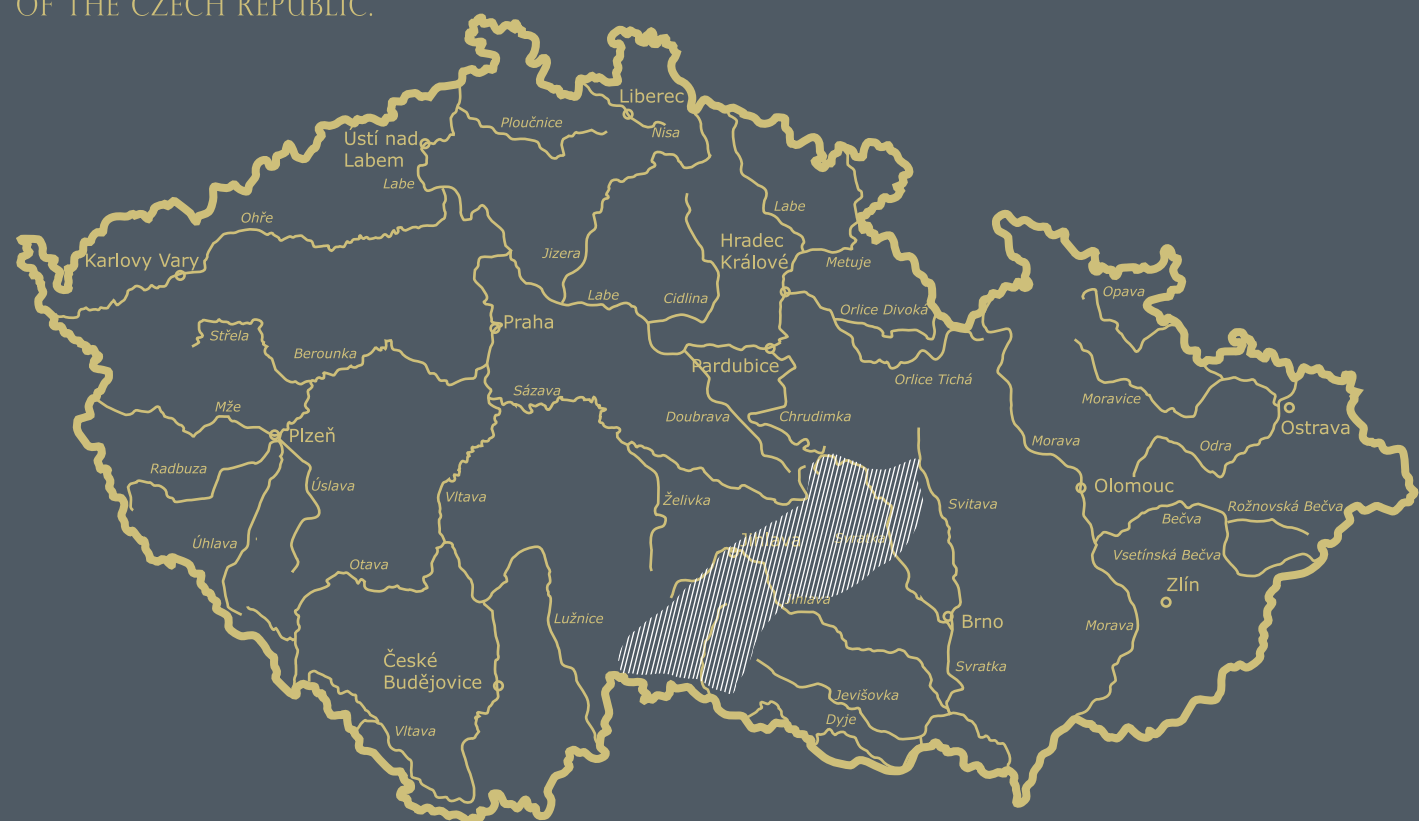


Laško region

Laško folk costume region lies on the north-eastern edge of Moravia by the Silesian border. It is an area where Polish, German and Moravian influences meet and people speak a distinctive mixed dialect. Even the costume contains some Silesian and in higher locations Wallachian aspects. Men's costume is characterized by high cone hats with small brims and women's by longish skirts called „komrážky“ and blue aprons.

MORAVIAN HORÁCKO

THE FOLK COSTUME REGION MORAVIAN HORÁCKO IS PART OF THE CZECH – MORAVIAN HIGHLANDS, WHICH LIE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC.



● Moravian folk costume region

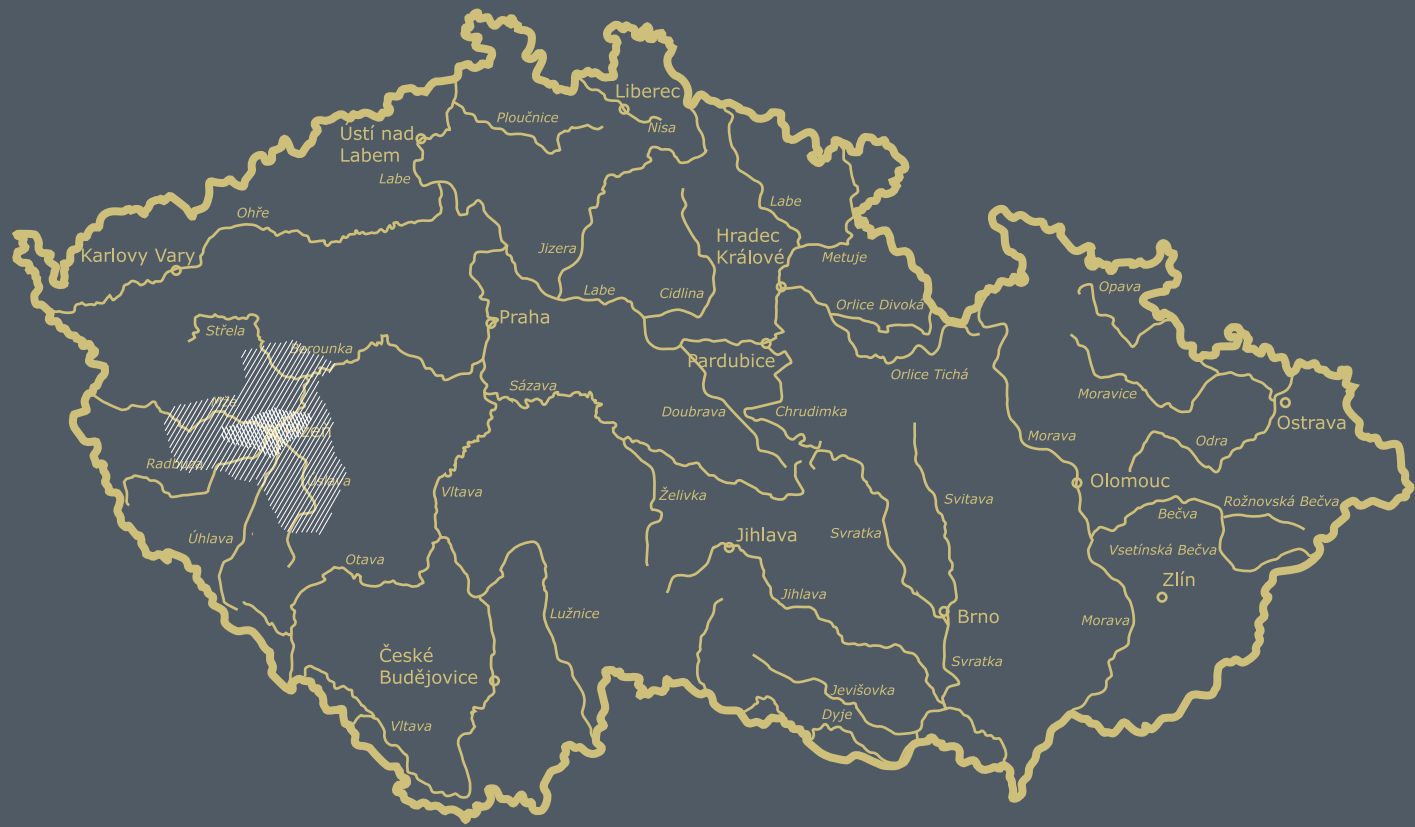
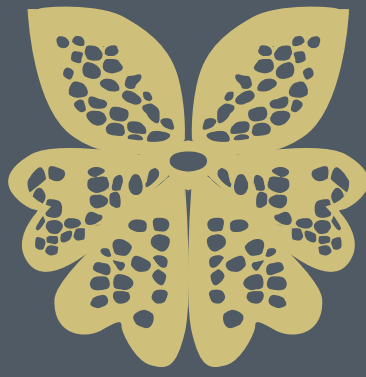


Moravian Horácko region

The folk costume region Moravian Horácko is part of the Czech – Moravian Highlands, which lie in the middle of the Czech Republic.

Agriculture was poor here and so the people lived off forestry and weaving. Horácko is quite large and lies not only in Moravia – it crosses the border deep into Bohemia. This results in a big variety of folk costumes. Local folk costumes can be perceived as slightly conservative (skirt length) and temperate in material usage (mostly home-made).

PLZEŇSKO



● Plzeňsko folk costume region



 MUZEUM
„OSTROV LIDOVÝCH KROJŮ“

Plzeňsko region

The wider area of Pilsen region (including Plassko, Stříbrsko, Chotěšovsko) is part of western Bohemia, where many significant types of folk costumes have formed. Pilsen folk costume became eponymous with the “national Czech folk costume”, thanks to its connection with the national classical music icon Bedřich Smetana and his opera *The Bartered Bride*. The protagonists of this famous opera have been wearing the Pilsen folk costume since its premiere to this day. In the 19th century, in the midst of the Czech National revival, the patriotic feelings led to the creation of a non-professional ethnographical club called “Baráčníci”. This club was widely supported and had a wide member base. Their costume was called “Czech Mařenka (little Mary)” and also evolved from the historical Pilsen costume, drawing inspiration from *The Bartered Bride*.