



Historical  
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# Proměny pohraničí Česka ve 20. století

## Transformations of the Czech Borderland in the 20th Century

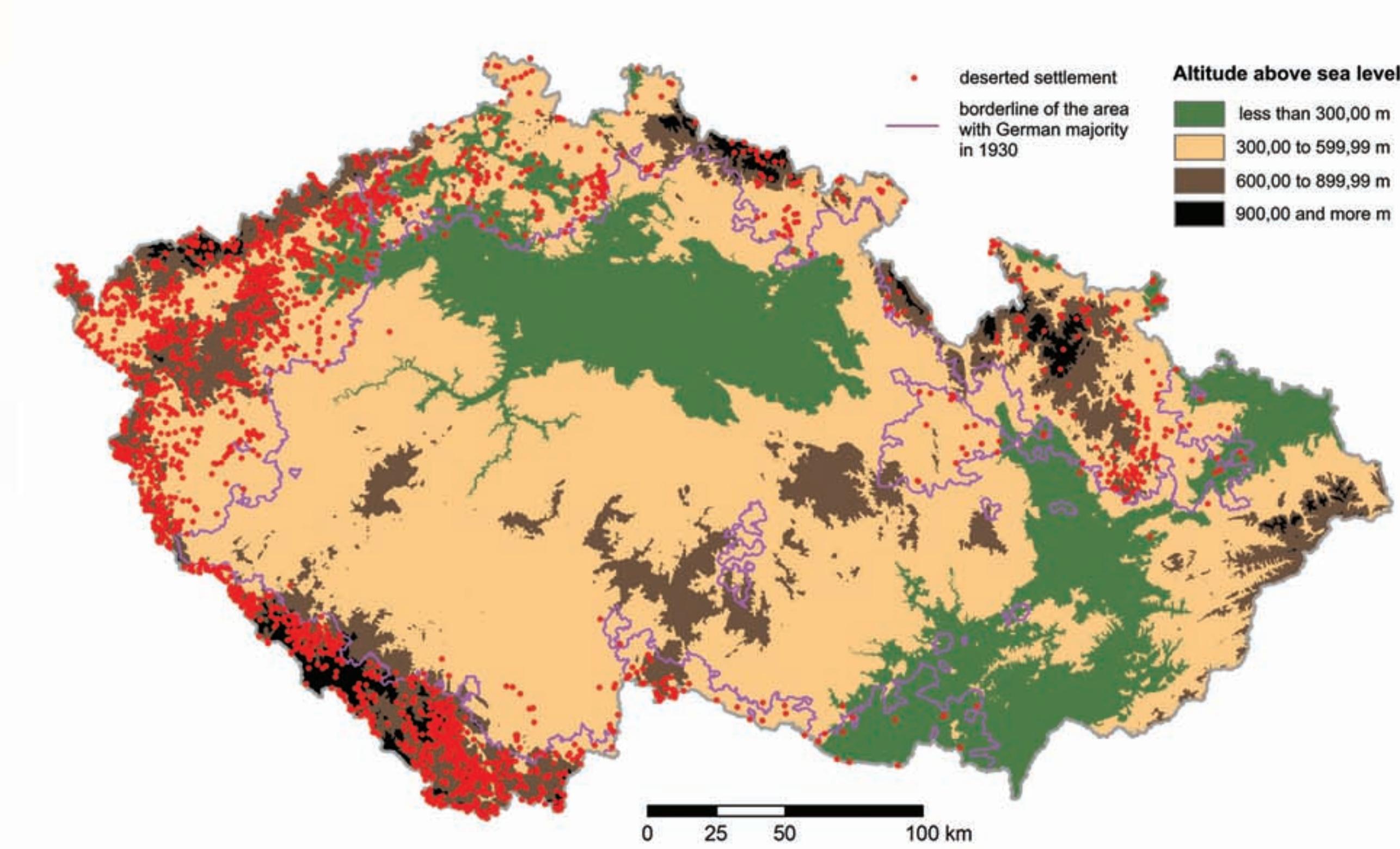
Zdeněk Kučera, Magdalena Kašková, Tomáš Havlíček

Borderlands are usually defined as transition zones between differing but mutually adjacent regions. Usually, these areas are distant from their centers and peripheral but also problematic areas. They are places that still attract attention; they arouse interest due to the relationships between individual states and nations, including their contemporary global context. Borderlands are also usually located at the intersection of two or more cultures, the mutual coexistence of which has been reflected in the development of these areas over the long-term. The transformations of the borderlands and border areas affect territories on both sides of the borders. They are thus experienced intensively and discussed by the people living there or who have some other relationship with the local area. The Czech borderland, long perceived as a territory with a specific character, is no exception. It has lost its transitional nature as a cross-border area mainly as a result of the changes that took place after the end of the WWII, when the area along the border, together with other parts of Central Europe, was affected by the relocation of millions of people and by the advent of the Communist regimes (which occurred in Czechia in 1948). Although the borderland, or at least some parts of it, has since undergone multiple transformations, the abovementioned events resulted in significant social, cultural, economic, and environmental changes and to many they were associated with losing or acquiring an identity and a home. In the transformation period after the fall of Communism in 1989, which also entailed, among other events, the fall of the "Iron Curtain," and after the splitting-up of Czechoslovakia in 1993, transnational linkages were renewed, including the establishment of specific cross-border regions (Euroregions). Many previously inaccessible areas were opened to the public and people have renewed their interest in the local heritage and landscape. Also, the social debate has become more relaxed; there is communication between residents on both sides of the border. The topic of changes in the borderlands became a "public topic". The accession of Czechia to the European Union in 2004 and the removal of border checks within the Schengen Area in 2007 further intensified the transformation of the Czech borderland from an area with a barrier character to a space for mediation.

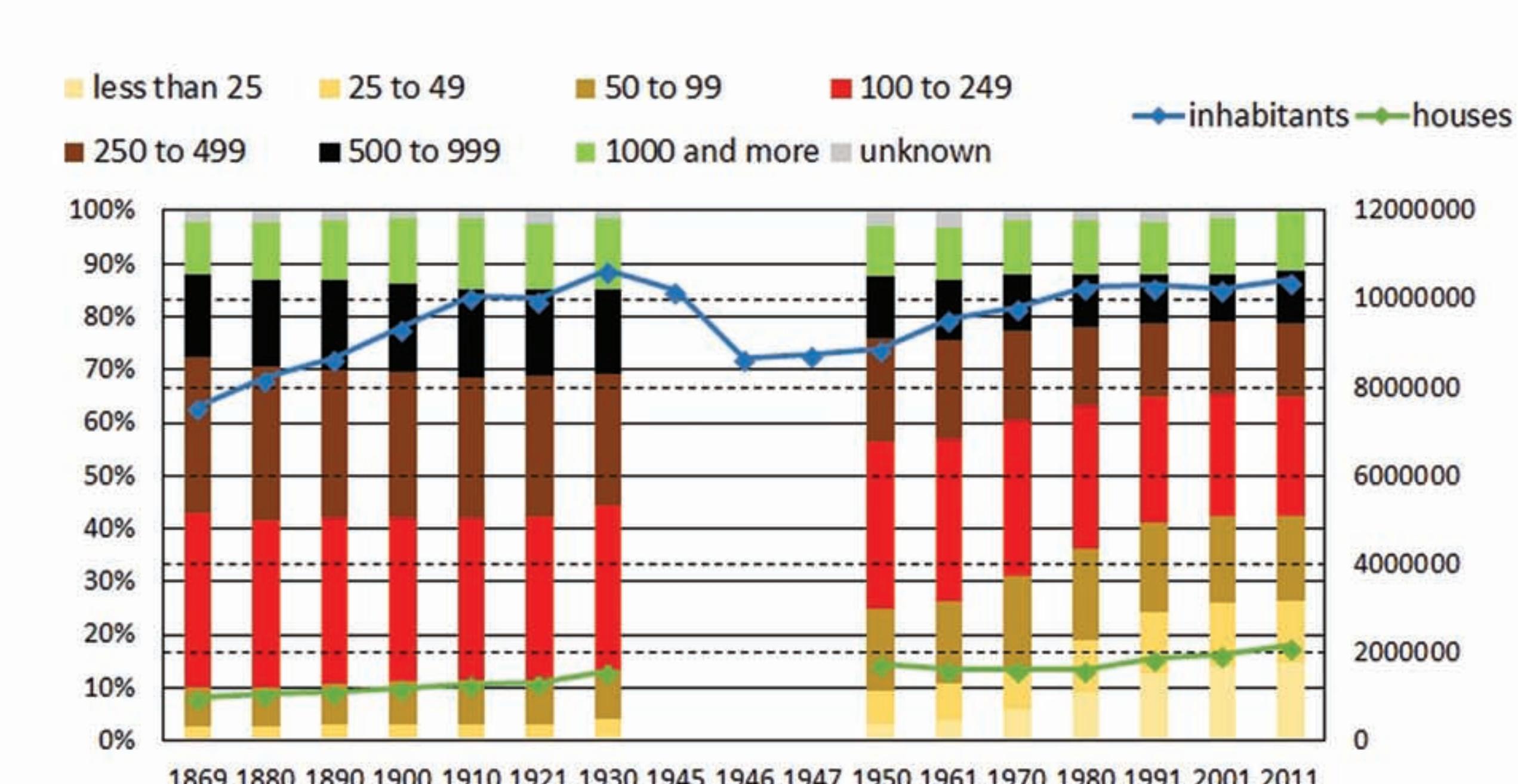
Pohraničí zpravidla vymezujeme jako přechodové zóny podél styku různých vzájemně sousedících regionů. Většinou se jedná o území vzdálená od svých center, periferní a problémové oblasti. Jsou to území, která proto stále poutají pozornost – vzbuzují zájem v souvislosti se vztahy mezi státy a národy včetně jejich aktuálního globálního kontextu. Tyto oblasti se také nacházejí na styku dvou či více kultur, jejichž vzájemné soužití se do vývoje příhraničních území dlouhodobě promítá. Proměny pohraničí a pohraničních oblastí se dotýkají prostoru po obou stranách hranic. Tím intenzivnější jsou provázány a diskutované lidmi, kteří zde žijí nebo mají ke zdejším územím vztah. České pohraničí, které je dlouhodobě vnímáno se specifickým charakterem, v tomto není výjimkou. Svůj přechodový charakter přeshraniční oblasti pozbylo totiž území zejména v důsledku změn po konci druhé světové války, kdy byla oblast pohraniční spolu s dalšími částmi střední Evropy poznamenána přesuny milionů obyvatel a nástupem komunistických režimů v moci (v Česku roku 1948). Přestože pohraničí, nebo alespoň některé jeho části, od té doby prošlo rozmanitým vývojem, uvedené události po mnohém byly také spojené se ztrátou či získáním identity a domova. V období transformace po pádu komunistického režimu v roce 1989 spojeném mj. se zánikem tzv. „zelezné opory“ a po rozdělení Československa v roce 1993 se znova začaly utvářet přeshraniční vazby, včetně vzniku specifických přeshraničních regionů (euroregionů). Mnohá dříve nepřístupné oblasti se otevřely veřejnosti, obnovují se zájem obyvatel o místní dědictví a krajinu. Došlo také k uvolnění společenské rozpravy včetně navázání komunikace mezi obyvateli po obou stranách státní hranice. Téměř proměně pohraničí se stalo „tématem veřejným“. Vstup Českého do Evropské unie v roce 2004 a také odstranění hraniční kontrol v rámci Schengenské smlouvy v roce 2007 pak dále prohloubily proměnu českého pohraničí od bariérového charakteru směrem k prostoru zprostředkování.



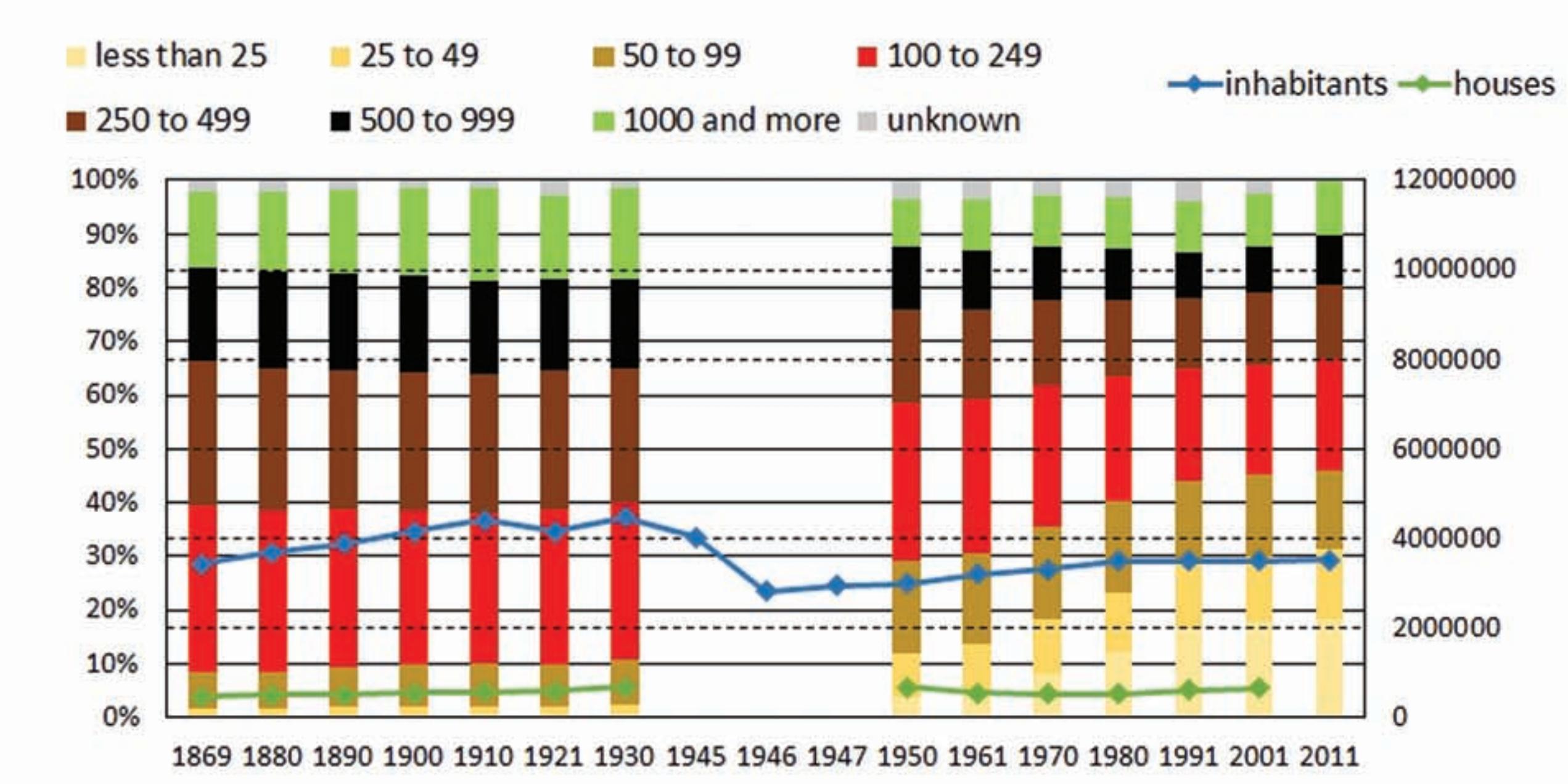
Settlements deserted in the borderland of Czechia after 1945



Population and settlement structure development in Czechia, 1869–2011

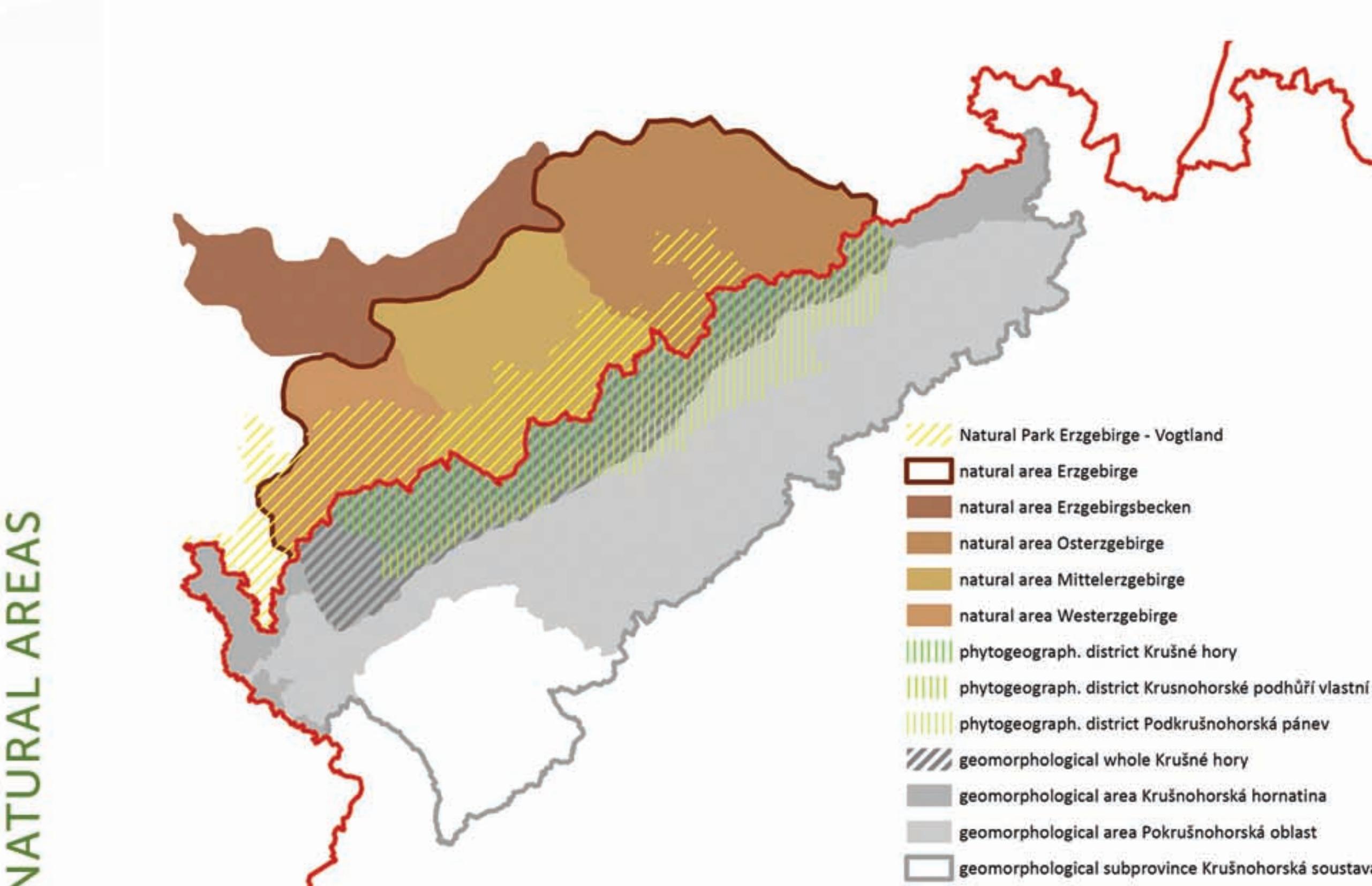


Population and settlement structure development in the borderland of Czechia, 1869–2011

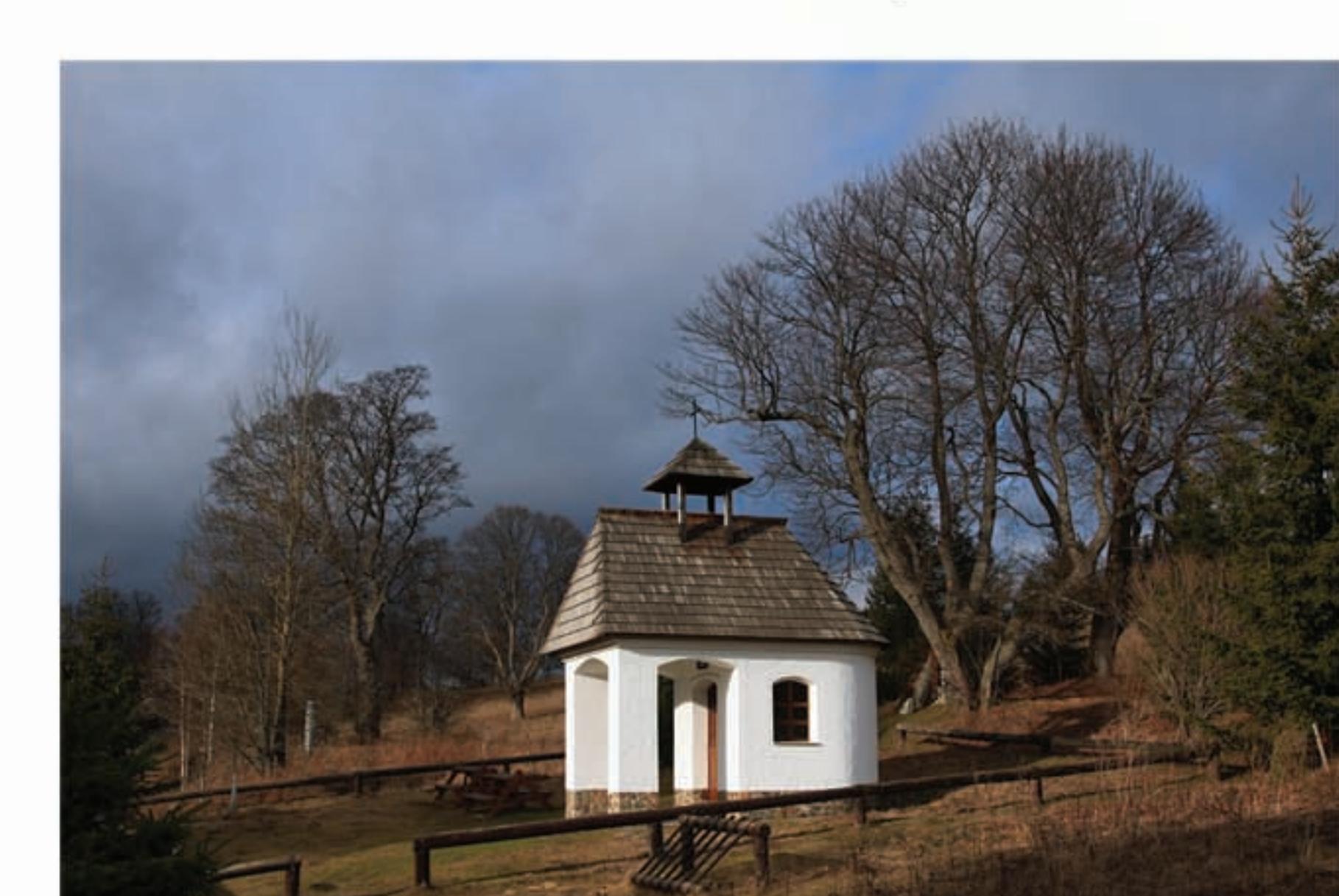


Sources: Historický lexikon obcí České republiky 1869–2005; Seznam obcí v zemi České, resp. Moravskoslezské, podle stavu z prosince 1945; Seznam obcí v republice Československé podle stavu z konce roku 1946, dil I. a II.; Seznam obcí v republice Československé podle stavu z počátku roku 1948, dil I. a II.

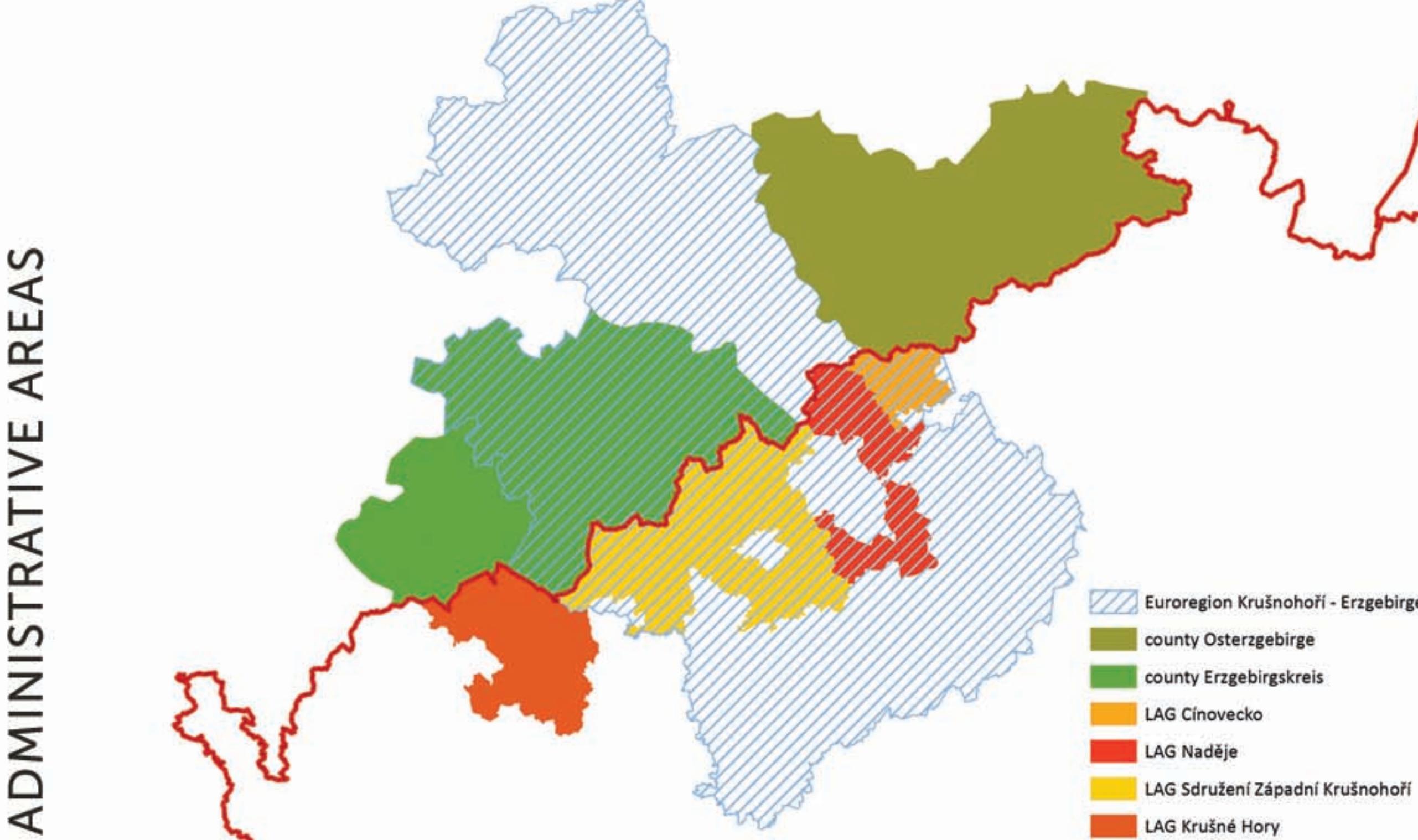
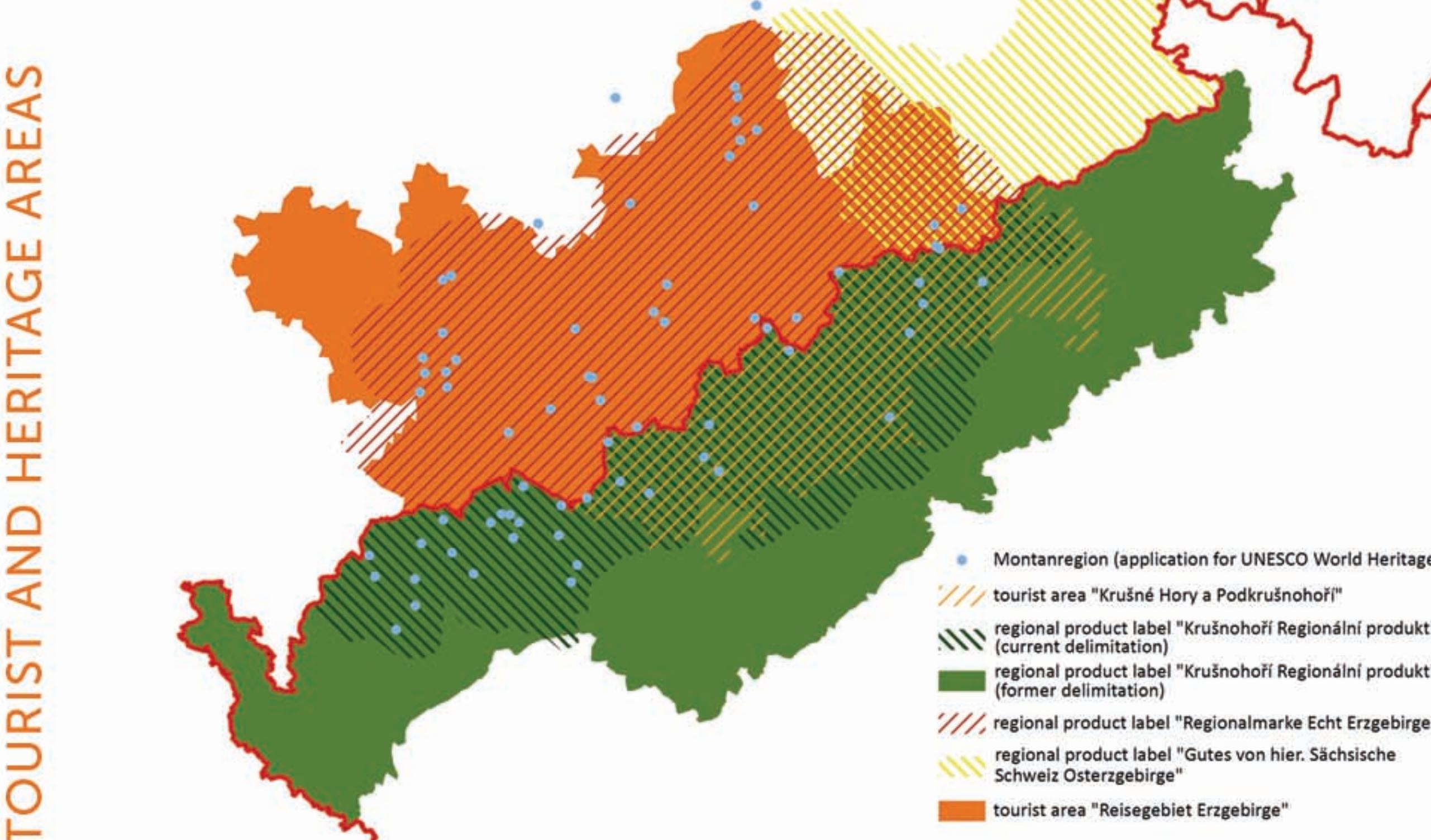
Various identities of the Krušné hory / Erzgebirge transboundary area on the border of Bohemia (CZ) and Saxony (DE)



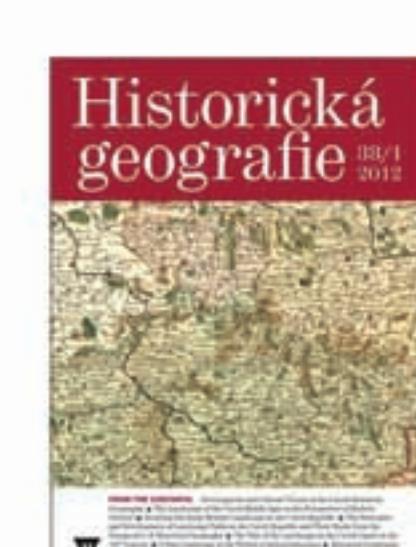
Places of deserted settlements are either overlooked or maintained, Žuhří / Haidl (district Klatovy).



An example of the cultural heritage and of the relationship to place restoration: Skoky pilgrimage site (district Karlovy Vary)  
Photo: Zdeněk Kučera.



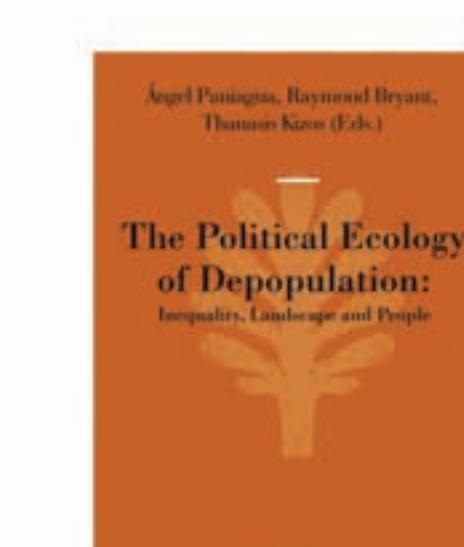
„Overall I try to be realistic. Pilgrimages, the way that they used to be (...) today are somewhere completely different. Here by us the Skoky, its glory (...) is gone, and won't be restored. It is more of a place where people can meet with God through Mary. There's a centuries-old tradition there (...), so it's more of a conception (...), that various activities that are there are not just spiritual, and actually it's cultural activities that dominate, like concerts and performances (...). I view this here in the borderland region as the content of the pilgrimages, (...) that it gives people here a lot more, or it addresses them, (...) Religious non-believers, lots of people more or less monuments and want to help that site, not out of some religious conviction, but I'd say that the people that do there something, that most of them are not involved in the church, but the fate of the site is not indifferent to them. They know that it is an incredible building. They respect it and want to preserve its value for future generations. Therefore, there is a noble idea behind it all. (...) I think this is where the path is leading. I mean here in our regions where traditions have been severed, interrupted.“



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