In 2015, the European Capitals of Culture celebrate their 30th anniversary! A new brochure has been published illustrating successful projects in recent European Capitals of Culture. They show how this EU action has become a laboratory of strategic investment in culture, benefiting our economies and our societies as a whole.

The European Capital of Culture initiative was developed in 1985 and has, to date, been awarded to more than 50 cities across the European Union. The 2015 European Capitals of Culture are:

- **Mons** (Belgium)
- **Plzeň** (Czech Republic)

What is it?

The European Capitals of Culture initiative is designed to:

- Highlight the richness and diversity of cultures in Europe;
- Celebrate the cultural features Europeans share;
- Increase European citizens’ sense of belonging to a common cultural area;
• Foster the contribution of culture to the development of cities.

In addition to this, experience has shown that the event is an excellent opportunity for:

• Regenerating cities;

• Raising the international profile of cities;

• Enhancing the image of cities in the eyes of their own inhabitants;

• Breathing new life into a city’s culture;

• Boosting tourism.

Read more on Creative Europe and watch the video about the European Capitals of Culture.