Euralille, France

**Numbers:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of Project</th>
<th>1986</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size (total)</td>
<td>110 ha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Size Gare TGV Lille Europe</td>
<td>400 x 15 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Cost of infrastructure for rerouting TGV**

- FF 800,000,000 (app. € 122,000,000)
- Cost Lille Grand Palais
  - FF 430,000,000 (app. € 66,000,000)
- Completion Lille Grand Palais
  - 1994

**Project Partner**

“Societe d’economie mixte” including both public and private partners with strong promotion initiative by then Lille Mayor Pierre Mauroy.

**Project Components**

- New Gare TGV Lille Europe train station
- Tour Credit Lyonnais and Tour WTC towers on top of station
- Grand Palais (congress, exhibition, and major concert hall)
- Triangle des Gares (shops, offices, apartments, and a theater)
- Espace le Corbusier
- New park

**On the crossroads of Europe**

When France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany originally decided to jointly develop the North European Train a Grande Vitesse (TGV) network in 1987, the Brussels – Paris TGV line was supposed to bypass Lille with a junction station serving the Channel Tunnel on the outskirts of the city. Yet, local and regional authorities believed that an inner-city TGV station could stimulate the regeneration of Lille as old-industrial city.

This vision was further stimulated by French laws passed in the early 1980s that promoted decentralized decision-making and redefined the role of state and local authorities, empowering the latter with new responsibilities on the urban level. Moreover, the original Franco-British agreement to built the Channel Tunnel was concluded and signed in the Lille town hall in 1986 where former Mayor Pierre Mauroy received President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Thatcher granting the mayor even more influence in the planned development.

As an ideal site already existed – Lille’s central station close to the old town and the Grande Place flanked a stretch of undeveloped land in military ownership of which 70 hectare could readily be made available – local and regional representatives of the Lille-Roubaix-Tourcoing-Villeneuve d’Ascq area and its neighboring communities in Belgium started under the leadership of Lille Mayor Mauroy an extensive lobbying campaign for Euralille.

In 1987, the city was able to secure the location for the TGV interchange station and appointed Rem Koolhaas as master planner and chief architect in 1988. Moreover, the Euralille “Societe d’economie mixte” was set up in 1990 comprised of both public and private sector interests to realize the project.

Essentially, the successful bid for the Euro-TGV and its station was seen as an important precondition for the development of a new city district that would reverse decades of economic decline in the region and revive Lille’s traditional role as a European center of exchange and communication.

Euraville became an area made up of several large-scale structures including the Triangle des Gares (shops, offices, apartments, and a theater), the TGV station (with its two towers Tour Credit Lyonnais and the Tour WTC), the Espace le Corbusier, a new park, and the Grand Palais (congress, exhibition, and major concert hall).

**Resources:**

- **Official website**
  - www.saeM-euralille.fr
  - www.euralille.com

- **Development plan**

- **Project description**

- **Critical analysis**
  - Mouaert, Frank; Salin, Elodie and Werquin, Thomas 2001 “Euralille Large-scale urban development and social polarization.” European Urban and Regional Studies. 8(2): 145–160