

ABSTRACT

Roubaix, Tourcoing and Lille Metropole

Roubaix is an industrial city in north-eastern France, near the border with Belgium. The population is approximately 100,000 and it is about 15 km from the centre of Lille, the chief town in the province. The *Lille Métropole Communauté Urbaine* (LMCU) heads the administrative and political framework for the management and development of the area and has 85 municipalities under it. The area, with an industrial tradition behind it, fell victim to economic decline from the 1970s onwards with a crisis in the textile sector and this was aggravated by the 1974 oil crisis. During the 1980s, LMCU and the municipalities in the area launched a development programme which followed a strategy of interpersonal cooperation by means of projects intended to unify the area and through conversion to the tertiary sector. Investments were made by central government and the European Union which have led to the development of infrastructures, fostering the revival of the area. The development of Roubaix has especially affected the **historical centre**, which showed a marked degree of economic and social degradation. The strategy adopted combined various aspects:

8. redefining the city's economic strategies;
9. bringing retail shops back into the centre;
10. creating a safe and attractive public environment and promoting the city's architectural heritage;
11. developing a cultural programme to attract visitors and promote local identity and social cohesion;
12. improving the condition of buildings for residents and to attract incomers;
13. linking the opportunities for employment and training for the local population to new investments.

Accompanying the revamping of the historical centre are the initiatives for renewing the **Pile quarter** and the **inter-municipal Canal area** in cooperation with Tourcoing. In this area there are various industrial textile structures which have been put to new uses, among which the role of *Condition Publique* is of particular importance, having been reborn as a 'cultural workshop'.