



EIBF on French minimum shipping costs for books

The **European and International Booksellers Federation** (EIBF) is a non-commercial organization representing the interests of the bookselling sector in the European Union and beyond. More specifically, we speak for national booksellers' associations, who in turn represent a variety of booksellers, including brick and mortar bookshops, online bookshops, independent bookshops and chains. Through our members, we speak on behalf of more than 25,000 individual booksellers all over the world.

We are proud to count the *Syndicat de la librairie française* (SLF) and the *Syndicat des distributeurs de loisirs culturels* (SDLC) among our membership and fully support their position in favour of the Darcos Law, i.e., the introduction of a minimum book delivery fee in France. The main reasons are the following:

- 1) Retail giants can afford to ship books virtually for free, as they often sell books at a loss while gaining profitability in other areas. Booksellers simply cannot afford to do this. As businesses with very low margins, they ship books via the French postal services (*Colissimo*), which can cost up to 7 EUR on average. This puts them at a significant commercial disadvantage with online retail giants. Setting the shipping fee to a standard minimum of 3 EUR would enable small and medium-sized booksellers to compete on equal grounds and protect them from the commercially aggressive “dumping” practices by large online multinationals.
- 2) Environmentally, it is harmful and irresponsible to practically remove shipping fees altogether for individual purchases, as it likely leads to an increase in transportation and packaging. Instead, bookshops already offer many flexible and convenient ways for consumers to purchase their books, for instance, through click-and-collect. Furthermore, with the new Darcos law, books can be shipped virtually for free from a certain amount (over 35EUR purchased).

The Darcos Law is, therefore, a proportionate measure that can contribute to fairer competition in the French book sector and counter a practice that, so far, only benefits the largest players.