Congrats on choosing to study abroad in Ireland! In addition to any cultural and social considerations you may have to make before and during your time abroad, you should consider how you want your actions to affect the ecosystems and communities that you will be a part of. This guide will walk you through ways to consciously and sustainably study abroad in Ireland, including your options to shop locally, ride public transit, and give back to the communities you will be staying in.
MAYNOOTH

Public Transportation

While Maynooth is a small town, it has a well connected public transit system which connects the town to Dublin and the rest of Ireland. Here is a link to a very helpful guide. There is a bus which can take you to Dublin and it is operational 24 hours a day. There is a train, though it is closed at night. There is also a bus system which runs through the town of Maynooth.

Food Options

There are many local markets and farmers markets in Dublin and the surrounding areas, though there are limited amounts of markets in Maynooth itself. Every Saturday, the Maynooth Market is held from 10-2. There are local stores like Masterson’s Fruit and Veg and The Fish Market, both of which have locally grown products.

Volunteering

Being a college town, there are plenty of volunteering opportunities in Maynooth. Volunteering is a great way to connect with, and contribute to the local community. Senior centers, soup kitchens, animal shelters etc. are always looking for volunteers. Also check out MU clubs and societies which have some volunteering options and societies you can join.

Recycling and Thrifting

Your housing will provide recycling and composting. There are also larger city wide containers in between MU and St. Patrick’s College. There are two thrift stores in Maynooth, and far more stores in Dublin. Also, Facebook Marketplace is useful if you need any furniture or more unique things. Be safe and smart.
CORK

Public Transportation

Cork is well connected with the rest of Ireland through its central train and bus stations, and it is easy to navigate around the city with public transportation. Cork has a well functioning bus system, and a map of the bus and train network can be found here. Buses can also be taken across Ireland and to more rural places. There is also a direct train from Cork to Dublin.

Food Options

Cork has multiple places to buy locally sourced and locally made products. Marina Market has produce, meat, and homemade meals. Mahon Point Market, Wilton Farmers Market, and Bandon Country Market are all farmers markets in Cork which have locally sourced produce and locally owned businesses. Good Day Deli is a popular and highly reviewed restaurant and deli which specializes in sustainable food.

Volunteering

Being a college and cosmopolitan city, there are plenty of volunteering opportunities in Cork. Volunteering is a great way to connect with, and contribute to the local community. Senior centers, soup kitchens, animal shelters etc. are always looking for volunteers. Also check out University College of Cork’s website for volunteering options and societies you can join.

Recycling and Thrifting

Recycling will be provided by your housing, and a guide on what to recycle and a map of city wide recycling locations can be found here. Cork has multiple thrift and second hand stores around the city. There is also a second hand furniture store in the north of the city, if you require more furniture.