

Study in Ireland.

An English-speaking EU destination with compact cities, varied campus settings and a strong international outlook. The choice between Dublin and a regional city can change the family budget as much as the choice of course.

Study language	English; check programme-specific evidence
Main routes	CAO for many undergraduate courses; some direct applications
Institution types	Universities and technological universities
Budget pressure	Accommodation, especially in Dublin
Good first question	Can the student find the right course and a realistic place to live?

For students coming from Spain or Italy, this guide brings the degree, admissions, economy, budget and everyday life into one decision. The examples are a starting point; always verify the exact programme and entry year.

THREE QUESTIONS TO SETTLE FIRST

Before the shortlist becomes a decision

1. The course and the route

Find three actual degrees, then check each course code, subject requirements and whether the student applies through CAO or directly. A familiar language does not make admission automatic.

2. The student's fee position

Ask what the student would pay for this programme and entry year, including any contribution or compulsory charges. Record the source of the answer rather than assuming that citizenship settles it.

3. The city and the room

Price a real housing option in the city of each course. Check the application date, contract length and journey to campus before treating that option as affordable.

What can the student actually study?

Universities span broad academic disciplines and research-led study; technological universities often emphasise applied learning, industry connections and regional campuses. Compare the teaching style and placement structure of the actual degree rather than assuming one institution type is automatically better.

A useful shortlist could compare Dublin with Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford. For each, open the module list, entry requirements, student support pages and accommodation information. Check professional accreditation when the intended career requires it.

02 / ADMISSIONS AND LANGUAGE

The route from Spain or Italy

The Central Applications Office handles applications for many undergraduate programmes. Course codes, order of preference, minimum requirements and any additional tests or portfolios all matter. Some pathways and institutions require a direct application. Read the applicant instructions for qualifications awarded outside Ireland.

For Bachillerato or maturità, verify subject and grade equivalence against the institution's published criteria. Ask whether English evidence is needed even if school subjects were taught partly in English. Work backwards from the course's specific calendar, including supplementary requirements.

03 / FEES AND THE REAL BUDGET

What a family should price

Tuition and charges

Check Free Fees eligibility, any student contribution, programme charges and the exact fee classification. EU citizenship alone does not settle every condition.

Housing example

Education in Ireland's January 2026 Limerick example gives about €690–€810/month on campus and €650–€900/month off campus. This is a Limerick illustration, not an Irish national rate; Dublin may cost more.

Living and setup

Add food, utilities, local transport, books, travel home, deposit and a reserve. Use a 9–12 month schedule depending on the tenancy and degree timetable.

Planning method: request the exact programme fee, price a real room, and add food, transport, insurance, travel home, deposits and a contingency. Recheck every figure before accepting an offer.

Make housing part of the choice

Ask the university whether first-year rooms are available, when applications open and whether an offer guarantees accommodation. Compare campus residences, private student accommodation, shared rentals and homestays. Check lease length, bills, deposit and commute. Never transfer a deposit without verifying the provider and contract.

Where might the student thrive?

Dublin

Largest choice and strongest metropolitan job market; housing is a major constraint.

Cork and Galway

Active university cities with distinct campus life; compare rent and course availability.

Limerick and Waterford

Potentially different cost and campus patterns; investigate transport and the specific neighbourhood.

Put the degree in context

Ireland's economy has visible technology, life-sciences, financial-services and tourism clusters. That context can help a student think about placements and graduate employers, but a sector's presence does not guarantee an internship or job. Review career services and course-specific placement records; check any right-to-work rules for the student's nationality.

Picture an ordinary Tuesday

English eases the academic transition for many Spanish and Italian students, while the weather, rental market and distance from family still require adjustment. Look at societies, mental-health support, disability services and travel connections. The student should know who to contact on campus in the first week.

A PLAN FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Five decisions to make together

1. Choose three real programmes. Save their module lists, admission pages and the exact degree awarded.
2. Check eligibility. Record qualification and subject rules, language evidence, application channel and every deadline.
3. Build one budget per city. Use the published tuition for this student, a real housing option and a full-year living estimate.
4. Test the daily experience. Ask about accommodation, travel, wellbeing, healthcare and who can help on arrival.
5. Assign the next action. Decide what the student researches, what parents verify and which questions need a university answer.

OFFICIAL STARTING POINTS

Verify for your entry year

[CAO applications ↗](#)

[Fees and Free Fees conditions ↗](#)

[Education in Ireland: Limerick costs, January 2026 ↗](#)

Reviewed September 2026. Cost examples are sourced and dated where available. National averages are not offers. Requirements, fees, deadlines, housing and work or visa rules can change; the university and competent authorities are the final source for the student's circumstances.

Talk with us in English, Spanish or Italian: universityabroad.eu/consultation/