



# Sustainable Travel to Zurich

We're glad that you're planning a long-term stay in Zurich. The mode of travel you choose to get here has an impact on the climate. There are also many ways to lead a sustainable lifestyle in Zurich.

If you're travelling from within Europe, the good infrastructure will allow you to choose from various modes of transport. The chart shows the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents (CO<sub>2</sub>e) caused by return trips from selected cities to Zurich.

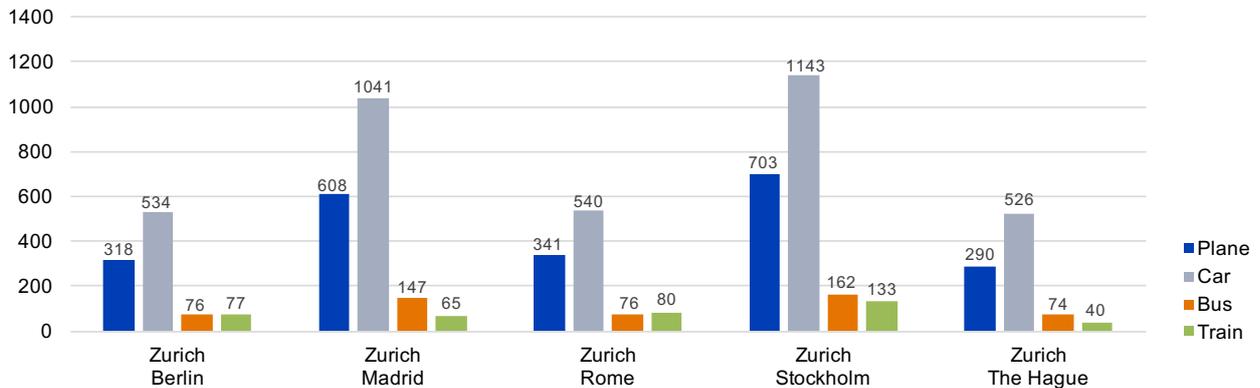
Trips from outside Europe are associated with a significant climate impact. A return trip from Washington D.C. to Zurich causes 2,121 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e and a trip from Canberra results in as much as 5,264 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e per person [1]. This by far exceeds the annual per capita CO<sub>2</sub> budget of one ton, which we should respect to keep global warming within acceptable limits [2].

If you can't avoid flying, keep in mind that direct flights usually cause fewer GHG emissions than stop-over flights [3], unless the occupancy rate or plane efficiency of the direct flight is lower.

The second-best option after avoiding flights is to take part in a carbon offset scheme, where you pay to compensate the GHG emissions you cause. Providers of carbon offsets differ with regard to their project standards and how they calculate emissions. We recommend looking for high project standards (e.g. "Gold Standard") and the inclusion of further greenhouse gases besides CO<sub>2</sub> [4, 5].

**Recommendations:**

- Travel by train or bus, if possible.
- If you cannot avoid flying, consider offsetting the GHG emissions caused.



**Example trips: GHG emissions (kg CO<sub>2</sub>e) of travelling to and from Zurich with different modes of transport**  
Calculation basis: Taking into account total life cycle. Occupancy rates: plane: 75%, car: 1 person, bus: 44%, train: 30-55%. Distances (there and back): Zurich-Berlin: flight: 1,320 km, car/bus/train: 1,692 km; Zurich-Madrid: flight: 2,524 km, car/bus/train: 3,300 km; Zurich-Rome: flight: 1,414 km, car/bus/train: 1,710 km; Zurich-Stockholm: flight: 2,918 km, car/bus/train: 3,622 km; Zurich-The Hague: flight: 1,202 km, car/bus/train: 1,668 km. Source: [1].

### References

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- 2 Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung globale Umweltveränderungen (2009): Kassensturz für den Weltklimavertrag. Der Budgetansatz, Berlin
- 3 Baumeister, S. (2017). 'Each flight is different': Carbon emissions of selected flights in three geographical markets, Transportation Research Part D, 2017, 1-9.
- 4 Stiftung Warentest. (2018). CO<sub>2</sub>-Kompensation: Diese Anbie-

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# Sustainable Living in Zurich



Photo: Stefan Walter

## Mobility

There are plenty of options to travel sustainably within Zurich, Switzerland and Europe. Within Zurich, UZH offers bicycle parking at each of its sites.

Swiss Federal Railways: <https://www.sbb.ch>

Night trains: <https://www.sbb.ch/de/freizeit-ferien/reisen-europa/nightjet.html>

Coaches: e.g. <https://www.flixbus.ch>

Bike sharing within Zurich: <https://www.publibike.ch/de/publibike/> (regular and e-bikes), <https://www.zuerich.com/de/besuchen/sport/zueri-rollt> (regular and e-bikes) or <https://www.smide.ch> (e-bikes)

Special flea market for bikes: <http://www.provelozuerich.ch/leistungen/veloboersen/>

## Waste

In Switzerland, recyclables such as paper, glass, PET or electronics are separated and disposed of separately. Each recyclable material has specific collection points and/or dates for regular collection organized by postcode. The app of the City of Zurich includes a reminder feature to help you remember upcoming collection dates.

Collection points: <https://recycling-map.ch/en/>

Collection dates: [www.erz.ch](http://www.erz.ch)

App: <https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/portal/de/index/ogd/anwendungen/2014/entsorgung-zuerich-app.html>

But not everything has to be thrown away. “Repair cafés” are an excellent way of coming together with others in a cozy atmosphere to fix various items, from old radios to clothes.

List of “repair cafés”: <https://repair-cafe.ch>

## Food

Sustainability is also important when it comes to eating and drinking on campus. Every canteen and restaurant has a vegetarian option and the Rämi 59 specializes in vegan food.

Canteens at ETH Zurich: <https://www.ethz.ch/en/campus/getting-to-know/cafes-restaurants-shops/gastronomy/restaurants-and-cafeterias.html>

Canteens at UZH: <https://www.mensa.uzh.ch/de/standorte.html>

The tap water in your flat or student room, in any public building, and from the numerous public drinking fountains is of excellent quality all over Switzerland. Keep in mind that over its whole life cycle a liter of mineral water in a glass (or PET) bottle causes about 200 times (glass bottle) or 400 times (PET bottle) more greenhouse gas emissions than a liter of tap water [1]. For many of the food and drink options on campus you can bring your own reusable lunchbox or cup. In UZH cafeterias every 11th coffee is free if you bring your own cup.

You can buy locally sourced and seasonal food at local street markets. Bring your own reusable bags to avoid additional waste.

List of local street markets: <https://www.zuercher-maerkte.ch/>

## Energy Use

Temperatures in Zurich vary considerably throughout the year. Proper heating and ventilation are therefore very important when it comes to ensuring a pleasant indoor climate, preventing mold from developing and avoiding energy waste.

Information on proper heating and ventilation: [http://www.studentenwerk-saarland.de/\\_cms/1/attachment/6983\\_500582f88871a72f07b1782d6ca\\_dec09.pdf](http://www.studentenwerk-saarland.de/_cms/1/attachment/6983_500582f88871a72f07b1782d6ca_dec09.pdf)

## Second-Hand Furniture, Books, Clothes and Other Items

You can find a number of “Brockenhäuser” (second-hand shops) all over Switzerland. Here you can buy second-hand items, ranging from furniture and household appliances to clothes. You can also donate items that you no longer need to these shops. Some “Brockenhäuser” support charitable causes, for instance by employing people who otherwise couldn’t find a job.

List of “Brockenhäuser”: <https://www.brockisearch.ch/brockenhaeuser/zuerich/>

There are numerous flea markets where you can buy and sell second-hand items.

Regular flea markets include for instance: <https://www.zuerich.com/de/besuchen/shopping/flohmarkt-buerkliplatz> or <https://www.flohmarktkanzlei.ch>

You can also buy or sell second-hand books on several online platforms.

Platforms: <https://marktplatz.uzhalumni.ch/en/category/5/offer> (not just books), [www.uniboard.ch](http://www.uniboard.ch) or <http://swapooks.ch>

## Meet People, Promote Sustainability

A great way to get to know new people and contribute to sustainability at the same time is to join one of the many student initiatives at UZH and ETH that promote sustainability aspects.

Student initiatives related to sustainability at UZH: <http://www.sustainability.uzh.ch/en/initiatives-networks/initiatives.html>

Student initiatives related to sustainability at ETH Zurich: <https://www.ethz.ch/en/the-eth-zurich/sustainability/active-for-sustainability/student-engagement.html>

At Campus Höggerberg there is also a student garden, Seed City, where you can get your hands dirty and grow and harvest vegetables.

Seed City: <http://www.seedcity.ch/>

Many neighborhoods in Zurich have “Gemeinschaftszentren” (community centers), where you can meet people, visit flea markets, join urban gardening initiatives and much more.

List of “Gemeinschaftszentren”: <http://www.gz-zh.ch>

You can get the latest information on sustainability at ETH and UZH and related events by registering for the newsletter of the ETH and UZH sustainability teams.

UZH Sustainability Newsletter: <http://www.sustainability.uzh.ch/en/newsletter.html>

ETH Zurich Sustainability Newsletter: <https://www.ethz.ch/en/the-eth-zurich/sustainability/active-for-sustainability.html>

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1. Jungbluth, N. (2006): Vergleich der Umweltbelastung von Hahnenwasser und Mineralwasser, Manuskript für die Informationsschrift SVGW und die Zeitschrift gwa

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