

EHITAYHU MESELE HAGOS



Country of origin: Ethiopia

Programme: Master Transportation Sciences,
specialization Traffic Safety
ICP scholarship student
now doing PhD at Hasselt University

Graduated: 2019

Ehitayhu Mesele Hagos from the master of Transportation Sciences class of 2019, now a Road Safety specialist/consultant in Ethiopia, describes her journey through UHasselt as 'exciting but rough'. She looks back at this journey with us.

Like so many others who pursue a master's degree, Ehitayhu, with her civil engineering background, wanted to be a specialist in her field. Traffic safety was the choice for her. Hasselt University was the perfect fit as it offered an ICP scholarship master of Transportation Sciences, specialising in Traffic Safety. She enrolled at UHasselt in 2017 after being selected for a VLIR-UOS scholarship. To her, that was the beginning of an exciting but rough journey.

Leaving Ethiopia for Belgium, Ehitayhu recounts her first days vividly as she was immediately seduced by the beautiful entrance of the Agora building of the university campus and the willingness of others to lend a helping hand. Of the many things she loved about Hasselt University, she mostly enjoyed the annually organized world evenings as it reminded her of home.

Ehitayhu found the courses interesting and the delivery mode of lectures was something she really appreciated. About the extra courses offered on campus she says 'The social orientation course made me know other nationals from different parts of the world'. To her, this course is a great initiative and made her more conversant with her environment.

She holds very fond memories of Mr Marc Thoelen who was so kind as to teach her how to ride a bicycle and of Prof dr Tom Brijs, her advisor who helped her and inspired her to continue with her PhD. However, the cold weather in Belgium and having to ride a bicycle in cold and sometimes wet weather was less pleasant for her.

Ehitayhu graduated in June 2019. Overall, her expectations were met and that is why she returned to Hasselt University to work on her PhD.

Now, working as a road safety expert at the Ethiopian Road Safety Association and as a PhD student, Ehitayhu has a passion to help others and wants to live a simple happy life. As an advice to all, she says 'Work hard and enjoy your life'.