

## **DIMITRIOS ZAVANTIS**



**Country of origin:** Greece

**Programme:** Master Transportation Sciences by distance learning

**Graduated:** 2022

**Dimitrios Zavantis originates from Greece. He is an Automation Engineer specialized in Motorway Operations and Maintenance. He has been working at the Aegean Motorway Management Centre in Greece, first as an Operator (2009 – 2012) and since 2012 as Supervisor (first employee to cover the then newly-introduced role). Being a supervisor has helped him develop his dynamism and gain experience in the management of motorway incidents. In May 2019, he was promoted to Coordinator of the Motorway Management Centre. Let's hear how he experienced his studies at Hasselt University as a distance learning student, combining work and studies.**

### **Why did you applied to enroll in the Master of Transportation Sciences by distance learning?**

Three years ago, I took the decision and applied for the Master of Transportation Sciences by distance learning at Hasselt University. I have been working at a motorway management centre in Greece since 2009 but I felt that something was missing. What was that? The knowledge of course. I was really experienced on motorway management issues but I felt that I needed to go and search deeper on my work. During all these years I have been taught about different modes of transport, human behavior, transport planning etc., things that are really important and helped me to become more efficient in my work. The university helped me a lot with problem solving situations and made me think about things in a different, more scientific way.

What I would like to emphasize is Hasselt University's contribution on professionals' creation. It is known that most universities prepare students by teaching them all the theoretical aspects of a specific subject. Hasselt gives you the opportunity to work on it. The internship is really important for a student to understand not only the theoretical aspects but also the practical aspects of his work. Hasselt creates professionals and this is the most important thing. This is why Hasselt stands out in relation to other universities. Internship helps students apply knowledge in an autonomous and self-managing manner, help them to adapt and work in a multidisciplinary environment, and make them more professional. This is the reason why I chose Hasselt, even if in my case the experience exists. Hasselt opened my view according to my job. This is the greatest achievement. If I had to choose a university again, Hasselt would be my first choice.

### **What do you think about the content of the master programme at Hasselt University?**

The content of the program can cover a wide range of students since the master of Transportation Sciences at Hasselt University has a multi-disciplinary take on transportation, including psychological, social, urban, environmental and infrastructural aspects. Courses taught by renowned professors from a leading university and the university's Transportation Research Institute, specialized in transportation and traffic safety.

### **What do you think about the way the distance learning master is organized?**

The organization of the program is excellent. Before the start of the semester, we already knew the most important dates of the whole year and that was very good as we were able to organize the rest of our program, since as distance learning students we combined our job and our master courses. A special thanks to Nadine Smeyers, who is always willing and available to answer any questions about the program. She is the best secretary I have ever met.

### **How did you experience the exams?**

At the beginning of the program, we had to go to university for the exams. The trip to Hasselt was very nice as we met our fellow students and our professors. In the last 2 years however, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the exams were done online. The University of Hasselt is far ahead in terms of online exams, as they have provided and arranged the last detail. I never expected that there could be such an organization from a university.

### **What do you think about the teaching team of the Master of Transportation Sciences?**

Finally, I would like to say a big thanks to all the professors I have had all these years. They were always willing to help but also to explain to us what we did right or wrong in the exams. At this point I would like to say a special thanks to Prof. Ansar Yasar for all his guidance and supportiveness all these years. I could not accomplish even half of what I have done without his guidance.

