

Jefferson and I are in very similar situations, so I'll speak for both of us. We are in the same master's program in economics at Nova SBE, in Lisbon, which will last a year and a half. I can speak for both of you that this has been one of the most wonderful and challenging experiences of our lives, both academically and culturally and personally.

Academic learning has been the broadest in this semester, mainly because some peculiarities of our cases make our master program a big challenge. The first challenge has been English. We are from very poor families from small towns in Ceará-Brasil, we are here thanks to successive scholarships we have gained in our trajectory, but unfortunately, in the midst of all this, we did not have time to improve our English as we would like, and we would need a smoother adaptation now. Therefore, it has been and has been a difficult and sometimes painful process to overcome this limitation and to do our best in our course completely in English. The second challenge is that, for some specific reasons, Jefferson and I started the master's program from the second semester, it means that next, we will do what should have been our first semester. Therefore, we did not have the basis of many disciplines we should have had and the stage of adaptation that students usually have at the beginning of any student journey. This was heightened by the delay in our visa, which made us arrive a week late for our classes. Well, at the end of that first block, we can see that even though our incomes have dropped significantly compared to what we had at Insper, we have learned as much or more than ever before given all the obstacles we had to overcome to be here.

Another aspect of great learning has been cultural. We can initially think that living in Portugal can be a great comfort zone, since the common language, part of the shared history, etc. However, this experience has been amazing to show surprising linguistic and cultural differences that make us so unique, each in its own way. The difficulties with our masters did not allow us many trips and leisure activities, as I said previously, we had to focus and strive to keep up with the pace of the studies. For that reason, we can only travel on the Easter holiday when we had a break for ten days after the first quarter. We took advantage of this opportunity to visit Paris and Barcelona, the choice of destinations came in part because we have friends living in these cities that could host us, and partly because of their cosmopolitan and vibrant environments. In Paris, we had the pleasure of visiting the famous sights that every day stir up sighs of its thousands of visitors, such as the Louvre Museum, Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, Arc de Triomphe, etc. In addition, we took long walks around the city, where we sampled delicious traditional foods from France as well as from the many other cultures that there live and we can live a bit of Parisian life. Then, we went to Barcelona. The beautiful city formed by narrow streets and impressive gothic cathedrals of many centuries of history and by wide avenues full

of sophisticated shops and mirrored buildings, without forgetting, of course, the incredible works of Catalan modernism and the ever so sunny beaches. That city is passionate!

Lastly, we have grown a lot as people. The last months were an avalanche of emotions and knowledge. Several times I could not believe that I am here with all my dreams coming true and others we had to remind ourselves over and over again of all our courage and determination to continue with the same strength in the face of the challenges of now as we have been before to get here.

A lot happened in this semester and it seems like I learned about myself and the world more than a lifetime ... until now, because everything was just the beginning.

Soon, we will have summer and we have incredible plans to take advantage of this opportunity in the best possible way. We have some learning goals in this period: to live and interact as much as we can with the cultural diversity of the European continent, while we can improve our English and grow as people, students, and future leaders.

I'm sure the next report will be filled with delightful stories, I cannot wait to live and tell them.

See you!