

## Proust Questionnaire



**Name:** Shirin Gurdova

**Age:** 28

**Hometown:** Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

**Current City:** Paris, France

**Current Employer:** Arbitration Practitioner

**Education:** LL.M. in International Dispute Settlement (MIDS), the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and the University of Geneva; LL.M. in Public International Law and Human Rights, Riga Graduate School of Law; B.A. in International and Business Law, American University of Central Asia.

**How did you get involved in international arbitration?** My proper introduction to arbitration was my work on an investment case during my first associate position. Eventually I opted for specialization in the field through the MIDS programme in Geneva.

**What is your favourite virtue?** Benevolence.

**What are your favourite qualities in another person?** Integrity, honesty, reliability and good manners.

**What is your chief characteristic?** Determination.

**What is your main fault?** Over-optimism.

**What is your favourite occupation?** If I had to start all over again, I would choose physics and in particular astronomy. The study of the universe and how it works has always fascinated me.

**What is your idea of happiness?** Sailing in the sea.

**What is your idea of misery?** Loneliness.

**If not yourself, who would you be?** Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman to travel in space.

**Where would you like to live?** On a Greek island with easy access to the mainland.

**Who is your favourite prose author?** Ivan S. Turgenev.

**Who is your favourite hero/heroine in fiction?** Hercule Poirot.

**Who is your hero in real life?** My grandmother, a strong woman who survived WWII and an ongoing inspiration to me.

**What historical person do you most dislike?** Pablo Escobar.

**What is your favourite name?** Sophia (wisdom) and Philippe (friend of the horses).

**What do you hate the most?** Wasting water, using plastic and generally being abusive towards the environment.

**What is your natural talent?** I am good at networking.

**What is your favourite arbitration-related decision?** Although not an arbitration case, I like *Barcelona Traction* which is often cited in investment cases for making the distinction between the rights of the company and the rights of shareholders.

**Who is your favourite arbitrator?** Professor Gabrielle Kaufmann-Kohler. Her decisions are always exceptionally well-reasoned and a source of knowledge.

**Who is your mentor?** My family has always been the best source of good advice.

**What is your motto?** Always remember who you are and work hard to become the best version of yourself.

**What do you hope to contribute to Young ICCA?** I hope to contribute my passion and knowledge for the field along with my networking skills in order to expand Young ICCA's reach to more regions and more young and aspiring arbitration practitioners.