

Milena Kadieva holds an MA from the Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, Bulgaria (Law, 1999), and an LLM from the Exeter University, United Kingdom (European Law, 2007)¹. She is a human rights lawyer and, since 2002, an activist of several Bulgarian NGOs. Her main interest rests on international human rights law, particularly women’s human rights protection, and the European system of human rights protection. Her work has been focused on violence against women, intersectional discrimination, sexual and reproductive rights and health as well as socio-economic rights of women. She litigates before the European Court of Human Rights and the CEDAW Committee. Milena Kadieva is the current managing director of DA Foundation – united against violence.

Милена Кадиева е адвокат, защитник на правата на човека. Завършила е Право в Пловдивски университет „Паисий Хилендарски“. Има Магистратура по Европейско право от Университета в Екзитър, Великобритания. Правила е специализации в Съда по правата на човека, Комитета на ООН за премахване на всички форми на дискриминация по отношение на жените, Комитета на ООН срещу расовата дискриминация, Интеррайтс – световна правозащитна организация и други. Работи в сферата на защитата на правата и интересите на лицата, пострадали от домашно насилие и множествена дискриминация, както и в сферата на семейното право. Прилага международно, европейско и национално право. Води дела пред Съда по правата на човека и Комитета на ООН за премахване на всички форми на дискриминация по отношение на жените. Носител е на наградите „Жена на Европа“ в категорията „Жена на действието“ и Защитник на правата на децата от насилие. Отличена е с Почетен знак от Адвокатска колегия-Пловдив за особен принос за издигане на авторитета на адвокатската професия в резултат на активната ѝ дейност за защита на пострадалите от домашно насилие.

¹ The dissertation she wrote was focused on the role of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women in protecting women against domestic violence.

I hold an MA from the Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", Bulgaria (Law, 1999), and an LLM from the Exeter University, United Kingdom (European Law, 2007)². I am a human rights lawyer and, since 2002, an activist of several non-governmental organizations operating in the area of human rights protection. My main interest rests on international human rights law, particularly women's human rights protection, and the European system of human rights protection. My work has been focused on violence against women, domestic violence in particular, intersectional discrimination and socio-economic rights of women.

Since November 2011, I have been working as a Managing director of Gender Alternatives Foundation (www.genderalternatives.org). GAF mission is to achieve a balanced civil society ensuring equal chances and representation of women and men and of different ethnic groups, in the public and private spheres. GAF works on pro-active research, education, counseling, litigation, campaigning and lobbying for legislative changes. Violence against women makes the main focus of its activities.

I have been working on DV counseling and litigation at national, regional and international level during projects implementation for supporting victims of domestic violence in the region of Plovdiv. I have several cases pending before the European Court of Human Rights. I have been involved in litigation before the CEDAW Committee. I have been regularly organizing and leading trainings for judges, prosecutors, police officers, lawyers, psychologists and social workers on the issues of VAW, DV in particular. I have been participating in the process of lobbying the Bulgarian Parliament for adopting gender sensitive laws. I have been active in campaigning for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

Between September 2002 and February 2012, I have been responsible for organization of the overall process of the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation's projects implementation in the branch in Plovdiv, focusing on counseling and litigation at national, regional and international level, having cases pending before the European Court of Human Rights and the CEDAW Committee. Since then, I have been involved in projects creating and enforcing European standards for helping victims of domestic violence and sexual violence, promoting the rights of minorities and enhancing intercommunity understanding in CEE, creating a program of gender equality for employment in the Balkan region, etc. I have been regularly organizing and leading training for judges, prosecutors, police officers, lawyers, psychologists and social workers on the issues of VAW, DV in particular. I have been participating in the process of lobbying the Bulgarian Parliament for adopting gender sensitive laws.

Between 2004 and 2006, I participated in the First Women's Human Rights Training Institute organized by the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation, the Centre for Reproductive Rights and the Network of East-West Women. The main areas of interest of the Institute were Violence against Women, Gender Discrimination in Employment and Sexual and Reproductive Rights. I coordinated the WHRTI in the period June 2009 – February 2012, lecturing on the case law of the ECtHR and the CEDAW Committee in the areas of VAW and multiple discrimination.

I had a three month internship with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD, December 2007-March 2008) and a three months internship with INTERIGHTS (March 2008-June 2008).

In July 2012, I took part in the 52nd session of the CEDAW Committee presenting the Shadow report of the Gender Alternatives Foundation which was focused on VAW and discrimination in Bulgaria. The Committee followed most of the recommendations suggested.

² The dissertation I wrote was focused on the role of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women in protecting women against domestic violence.

An inter-ministerial working group was set up to draft a Plan for the implementation of the Committee's recommendations. As a GAF representative, I took part in the drafting process. On 25.07.2013, the Council of Ministers adopted the Plan prepared by the working group. GAF is involved in the process of the implementation of the Plan.