

## **Quick recap**

Alexandra led a discussion on equestrian sports within equine-assisted services, building on the topic introduced at the 18th Heti Congress in Budapest, and plans for further exploration and development of these sports were discussed. The establishment of a new task force for sports led by Mariana Grammatikaki was announced, and the classification system for Para driving and Para dressage riders was explained. The conversation ended with discussions about various equestrian disciplines for people with disabilities, the need for more trainers who can work with disabled athletes, and the potential for collaboration between Heti and Virtus.

## **Next steps**

Marianna to organize online seminars for trainers on transitioning from therapy to competition in equestrian sports.

Marianna to build a platform with information on how to start in equestrian sports for people with disabilities.

Heti to create a list of contact persons for each country that people can reach out to for information on equestrian sports for individuals with disabilities.

Inês to join the Heti Sports Task Force.

Marianna to investigate the potential inclusion of "showing" as a discipline for less able-bodied individuals in equestrian sports.

HETI Sports Task Force to consider including vaulting as part of their scope.

Margaret to share information about Heti's sports initiatives at the upcoming Canadian national conference.

Marianna to explore the possibility of creating a Heti video competition platform for remote participants.

## **Summary**

### **Equestrian Sports in Equine Services**

In the meeting, Alexandra led a discussion on equestrian sports within equine-assisted services, building on the topic introduced at the 18th Heti Congress in Budapest. Participants included Margaret Tibow, Maria Lape, Amalia, Olga, Maria Liga, and Kostadina, each sharing their experiences and interests in the field. The conversation ended with plans for further exploration and development of these sports, with a focus on supporting their growth.

### **Sports at HETI Congress Overview**

Alexandra from Greyso led a discussion on sports at the Hetiti Congress in Budapest, sharing key points and outcomes. She announced the establishment of a new task force for sports led by Mariana Grammatikaki. The discussion covered three international organizations associated with sports in equine-assisted services: Federation Equestrian International (FEI), Special Olympics, and Virtus. Alexandra explained the classification system for Para driving and Para dressage riders, and the differences between Virtus and Special Olympics. She also mentioned the upcoming global games held every four years. The discussion concluded with an overview of the differences and similarities between Special Olympics and Virtus, and the importance of providing information on these organizations.

### **HETI Task Force for Sports**

Alexandra initiated a discussion on the Heti task force for sports, led by Marianna Grammatikagi. The focus was on sharing ideas and expectations from members. Marianna, a Paralympic sports coach, expressed her ambition to bridge therapy and competition. Margaret from St. John's, Newfoundland, shared their program's success in competitive dressage and video competitions, which led to a Paralympic athlete. Marianna suggested creating a platform for video competitions and judging for those in remote areas. Margaret agreed and offered to share this information at their upcoming national conference. Amalia asked for a description of the video competition process, which Margaret agreed to provide.

### **Virtus and HETI Potential Cooperation**

Margaret discussed the video conferencing program for horse riders, which allows participants to ride their own horses and submit their results. Marianna added that a similar platform exists for able-bodied riders, providing specific rules for filming and submitting videos, and offering feedback and awards. Alexandra clarified that there is no conflict between participating in Virtus and Special Olympics. Maria suggested that Virtus started in 2015 after the Taiwan Hetis Congress. The team discussed potential cooperation between Heti and Virtus, with Alexandra asking for ideas on how to connect and cooperate.

### **Creating a Worldwide List of Instructors**

Maria proposed the idea of creating a worldwide list of instructors and special Olympics for people with intellectual impairments. She suggested that Heti could become a guide for athletes seeking information on sports branches and instructors. Maria emphasized the need for accurate information and the potential for Heti to initiate something that could be followed by others. Alexandra agreed with the idea and mentioned that in Greece, Special Olympics has a list of their cultures and coaches. Maria also highlighted the need for a list of trainers and judges for people with physical impairments.

### **Transitioning Therapy to Competition Guidance**

Maria and Mariana discussed the need for guidance and information for people transitioning from therapy to competition. They agreed to work on this issue with Heti, with Mariana taking the lead in organizing online seminars for trainers and building a platform to share information. Maria also suggested that Inês, a neuroscientist, could contribute to the task force due to her knowledge of physical activity effects and zoology. Alexandra mentioned a new message from Margaret Tibow, who expressed interest in learning and sharing information on the topic.

### **Equestrian Disciplines for People With Disabilities**

The meeting concludes with discussions about various equestrian disciplines for people with disabilities. Marianna confirms that vaulting will be included in the task force's scope, and Maria shares her experience with psychoeducational vaulting. Sara introduces the concept of "showing" from the UK, which involves leading horses through obstacles and checking conformity. The group discusses the need for more trainers who can work with disabled athletes, and John Benjamin mentions organizations that offer certification programs for this purpose. The meeting ends with participants expressing gratitude for the informative discussion and collaboration.