**Welcome speech, 29. April 2016**

**Digital Transform dissemination event**

Dear Mrs Director, Dear Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests,

I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to you on behalf of the Hungarian Rectors’ Conference in the dissemination event of the Digital Transform project.

We are all aware of the fact that the digitally driven technical development in the 21st century urges major changes in all dimensions in our lives, at any sector.

Obtaining any information is no longer a value in today’s knowledge societies – using the information in a way that it creates solutions to the rapidly changing societal and economic issues is the value. No doubt, that for this, people need to possess the skill to use digital technologies creatively. Students can be called “digital students”, but do the Higher Educational Institutions meet their needs and expectations? Do the institutions support the evolvement of students’ interdisciplinary knowledge, their entrepreneurial attitude, or their solution-oriented, creative way of thinking? Unfortunately, the European Higher Educational sector could not yet fully adapt to the changing world, to a large extent due to “old-fashioned”, ineffective institutional leadership and management.

There are several ways to realize the improvement, basically increasing the effectivity of the Higher Educational institutions’ governance. An initiative to foster financial effectivity is the in Hungary is the system of Chancellors. Chancellors, taking over the financial responsibility from the rector, operate in HEI-s from the end of 2014. The division of the responsibility for financial matters and the responsibility for professional issues tries to support the institution’s financial consciousness, which we can regard as a first step towards sound financial management. Nevertheless, we must improve effectivity in wider aspect, throughout the whole regulatory environment of the institutions.

Regulations that make difficult for HE institutions to cooperate with others should be reconsidered, because these regulations obviously reduce the flexibility of HEI-s, and thus prevent institutions from having an entrepreneurial attitude, which is a basic element of becoming an innovative organization in the 21st century. Besides, rigid regulations hinder competition inside and among the HEI-s should be destroyed.

From another aspect we could say that the institutions’ room to manage financial issues should be increased to a sufficient level, and in the meanwhile we should raise the interest of the institutions to perform effectively not only professionally but financially, as well.

It is, though, a challenging field with many actors and factors: the drive to make good performance should be evoked, and should be dominant both in HEI’s employment systems and the institutions’ financing system.

These circumstances seem rather complex to reach at first sight, but after examining them thoroughly, we can easily come to a consequence that many of these conceptual changes can be accelerated by modern information technologies used in a creative way.

Today’s workshop aims at fostering exchanges between leaders of universities in Europe based on the result of a survey carried out in the framework of D-Transform project, and at discussing innovations considering collaboration alternatives backed up by modern information technologies. I wish you to find a few of these solutions today through successful discussions!