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**Dr. Dries de Kaste**

National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, NL

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Dermatology, Universitair Ziekenhuis Brussel

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FARM - Vrije Universiteit Brussel

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FARM - Vrije Universiteit Brussel

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FARM - Vrije Universiteit Brussel

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FARM - Vrije Universiteit Brussel

**Dr. Eric Deconinck**

Medicines, WIV-ISP

**Dr. Jacques De Beer**

Medicines, WIV-ISP

PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences

2014-2015

INVITATION to the Public defence of

**Bart DESMEDT**To obtain the academic degree of '**DOCTOR IN PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES**'**Illegal Cosmetics on the Belgian Market****Fryday 4 September 2015**Auditorium **Brouwer**, 17:00

Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Laarbeeklaan 103, 1090 Brussel

How to reach the campus Jette:

<http://www.vub.ac.be/english/infoabout/campuses>

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

## Summary of the dissertation

During the last years, illegal cosmetics flood the European market via Internet and the so-called "black markets". Cosmetic products can be considered illegal whenever they are not in line with the cosmetic legislation (e.g. incorrect ingredient list, wrong packaging, containing actives which are not allowed, actives that are not claimed on the ingredients list, ...). An important group of illegal cosmetics are skin bleaching agents, usually applied to the facial skin, hands and other parts of the body for depigmentation of hyperpigmented regions, but more importantly for general reduction of the skin tone. They are in particular popular with ethnic groups with a darker skin tone. These cosmetic products often contain illegal active substances that may provoke as well local as systemic toxic effects, being the reason for their banning from the EU market. Illegal substances known to have bleaching properties are among others, hydroquinone, corticosteroids, tretinoin and mercury derivatives.

As no reliable information is available on the dimension of the problem and the harmful effects for the consumers, the Scientific Institute of Public Health (WIV-ISP) and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) department In Vitro Toxicology & Dermato-cosmetology (IVTD) started the collaborative research project ILCOS, an acronym that stands for Illegal cosmetics on the Belgian market, which mainly focuses on skin whitening cosmetics. The outcome of the ILCOS project will allow a campaign to inform Belgian consumers and indirectly European citizens in general of the potential danger related to the use of these products, finally aiming at reducing their use.

## Curriculum Vitae

Bart Desmedt was born on the 16th of June 1987 in Borgerhout, Belgium. He attended secondary school, orientation Technical Chemistry, at the Don Bosco school in Antwerp, Belgium. He started his academic career at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Belgium and in 2011 he completed his Master of Science in Drug Development with high distinction. In 2013 he enrolled in the Master of Science in Management of which he currently finished the entire curriculum and has to defend his Master thesis in January 2016.

Bart Desmedt obtained his research grant from the WIV-ISP of the Belgian Government in September 2011. He carried out the analytical chemistry-related research of his doctoral thesis at the Department of Medicines at the Operational Directorate Food, Medicines and Consumer Safety of the WIV-ISP. The biopharmaceutically related research was carried out at the Department of In Vitro Toxicology and Dermato-cosmetology (IVTD) of the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy of the VUB.

The results obtained during his doctoral research work were presented at several national and international scientific conferences. He authored 10 scientific publications in international peer-reviewed journals, out of which 7 as first author, with 2 currently under review. He is also first author of one book chapter and 3 popularizing communications. He has supervised 7 students for their master thesis, 6 in Pharmaceutical Sciences and one for the Master after Master in Industrial Pharmacy.