

## **Developing Structural Explanations of the Behavior of Complex Systems: A Path towards Increased Understanding of Crime, Conflict, Illegality, and Security**

[Ignacio Martinez-Moyano](#), Argonne National Laboratory / University of Chicago

In understanding conflict, crime, and illegality, change and complex interactions with multiple time delays and non-linear effects seem to be the norm. As a result, different stakeholders interested, or with a mandate, to design and implement interventions to control and decrease these problems, face many challenges and difficulties when trying to complete the necessary tasks to be successful in their endeavors. Linear and traditional analytic methods, including many statistics-based approaches, fall short in helping us understand problematic behavior in complex systems and in changing such behavior; they provide faulty and, in many cases, misguided recommendations. Developing structural explanations of the behavior of complex systems provides a promising and quite powerful approach for tackling dynamic phenomena prevalent in complex systems. In this presentation, the use of the system dynamics approach – a specific approach to developing structural explanations of the behavior of complex systems – in understanding of crime, conflict, illegality, and security, will be discussed.