

# Historic! Tec professor participates in first debate in prison



[Tec de Monterrey](#) professor **Jorge Ruiz del Ángel** was on the question selection committee for the **first debate in Mexico** between political parties to be organized **from inside a prison**.

The debate took place this May 3 at the **Santa Martha Acatitla Men's Social Reintegration Center**, in Mexico City.

*“This is a **unique exercise at a national level**, and it’s important to **shine a light on the rights of people in preventive detention** and those of people who have already been sentenced,” Ruiz explained.*

**Preventive detention inmates have the right to cast their vote**, due to the presumption of innocence.

This exercise will enable this population to answer 12 questions about the “Care System Within the Family Environment,” before casting their **early vote from May 6 to 20**.

## Details about the historic debate held in a prison

This debate was organized by the **Center for Social Justice Studies and Action (CEA)** and the **Electoral Institute of Mexico City (IECM)**.

Taking part were **political party representatives** who are running for the **Head of Government** and different positions of public office in Mexico City, including **districts and local councils**.

The special IECM commission participating in the selection of questions included Luisa Cantú Ríos as moderator; Valentina Lloret Sandoval, co-founder of CEA Justicia Social; and **Jorge Ruíz del Ángel, Tec de Monterrey academic**.

After an internal call for questions, prisoners in preventive detention at different detention centers sent in their suggestions.

The committee selected 12 questions on the topic “Care System Within the Family Environment of People in Preventive Detention.”

For security reasons, **this historic prison debate was not broadcast live**. However, it was recorded by the IECM to be later posted on its social media accounts.

The video will also **be screened in all prisons in Mexico City**.



**Why is it important to hold a debate in prison?**

This exercise is the result of a **diagnostic carried out by the National Electoral Institute (INE) in 2023**, related to the exercise of the **electoral political rights of people in preventive detention** in prisons in Mexico City.

*“Let us remember that **people in preventive detention have a range of rights, including the right to vote**, but this must be guaranteed by the authorities due to their circumstances,”* Ruiz

explained.

When a person who has been detained **is sentenced, they lose their right to vote.**

He also adds that this came about from a ruling in 2019, in which the Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Branch of the Federation determined that the Mexican government had to guarantee spaces for participation through the active voting of this population.

*“Like the general population, people in preventive detention have the right to be informed so as to cast a free and secret vote. “This debate is a tool for them to obtain data and information of interest that they wouldn’t otherwise be able to obtain.”*

This exercise took place 3 days before **92,792 people in preventive detention** cast their **early vote (May 6 to 20).**

*“This exercise is important to **shine a light on the rights of people in preventive detention** and those of people who have already been sentenced.”*

### **A life dedicated to human rights**

For Jorge, having participated in this exercise was one of the highlights of his career, since **he has dedicated the last 18 years of his life to this issue.**

He worked at the [Human Rights Commission of the Federal District](#) (CDHDF) for 10 years, where he attended to people deprived of their liberty and became passionate about the subject.

*“It’s a forgotten issue that’s extremely important because it’s about a population whose rights have historically been violated and I enjoy being part of a change where their rights are recognized.”*

Jorge participated in the final part of the [National Penal Enforcement Act](#) and in various assessments on mental health and women offenders.

As a **Tec de Monterrey professor**, he also **seeks to raise awareness among his students** about these issues, since it’s vital to redirect people’s lives once their sentence ends and guarantee them opportunities they didn’t have before.