

Rae Municipality: Alternative Options if the Draft Regulation Proceeds

Below is a compact, shareable overview of alternative policy options in case the municipality does not step back from the planned changes. The aim is to preserve service availability and parental choice while giving the municipality predictable cost and quality control.

Option A: Protected Choice (Most realistic compromise)

Goal: keep choice, but within clear and limited rules.

- Ages 1-3: the right to supported private provision remains, regardless of whether a municipal place is offered.
- "Compelling reason" exception: families may choose a private provider if the municipal option is not suitable (distance/logistics, group suitability, special support needs, siblings' logistics, etc.). A decision should be issued within e.g. 10 working days.
- Co-payment cap: the family's out-of-pocket share is capped at X (a fixed EUR amount or a % of the municipal fee).

Option B: Municipal Framework Contract + Approved Partner List (Controlled choice)

Goal: the municipality gets cost and quality control; the private sector remains viable.

- The municipality creates a list of contracted private providers (private nurseries/kindergartens) that meet agreed quality requirements and transparency standards.
- Municipal support is paid only for contracted partners; families choose among the partners.
- Price cap models:
 - B1: partner price <= average municipal operating cost per child (excluding capital investments) minus 5-10% (the municipality wins immediately).
 - B2: the municipality funds a standard service package up to a fixed ceiling; extras (e.g., extended hours, special services) can be topped up by the family.

Option C: Redefine the "Place Offered" Rule (Simplest political compromise)

Goal: the municipality can still say it prioritises municipal places, but only when the offer is genuinely usable.

- A municipal place offer counts only if it is realistically usable: reasonable distance, appropriate age group and group conditions, start date that works (not months later), and minimum service conditions met.
- If these conditions are not met, supported private choice remains available.

Add-ons that strengthen any option (recommended)

- Buffer places: the municipality purchases flexible capacity from private providers for peak periods in fast-growing areas.
- Common quality framework: agree 6-8 measurable indicators (staff qualifications, group size/occupancy, onboarding/adaptation, access to support services, parent feedback, etc.).
- 2-3 year agreements + indexation rule: stability for providers and predictable budgeting for the municipality.
- Annual review based on data (cost, quality, availability) and adjustments where needed.

One-line positioning (for internal alignment)

- Option A = child- and family-centred, fast relief for capacity pressure.
- Option B = municipal control + cost-effectiveness + private sector survives.
- Option C = the simplest fair rule that prevents forced choices and unrealistic offers.