Where is the Realism in the State’s ‘Hotchpotch’ Programme?

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The publication of the new programme for government brought few surprises. It consists of only 33 pages, almost half of its most significant components being juggled or thrashed out in the machinations of the removal of its clauses. The lack of transparency about matters such as the number of people who will benefit from its measures, or whether it has even been read, is shocking.

Most worryingly, it contains only 33 pages, an average of 1.4 pages per ‘policy’. Under the heading of ‘Public Participation in the Planning Process’, the body argues that: “Such input will ensure that the development of policy is informed by the views of its intended beneficiaries, including members of the public and representatives of interest groups.”

Despite the fact that all but one of the policy papers have been launched on the internet, there is no mention of any consultation with any of the groups or individuals who have undergone the process. In fact, the only consultation that has taken place is the one that has taken place in the house of government, where the programme will be debated and voted on.

The programme was launched on 18 May, with a press release stating that it would “deliver” on its promises. However, despite the fact that it has been months in the making, there is no sign of any progress towards its implementation. The only thing that is clear is that the government is in no rush to implement its promises.

The programme is an example of realpolitik in action. It is a document that has been carefully crafted to meet the needs of a government that is facing a crisis of confidence. It is a document that is designed to be as unobtrusive as possible, yet it is one that is full of promises that will never be fulfilled.