

Discontent with What?: Values, Identity and Opposition to EU Enlargement

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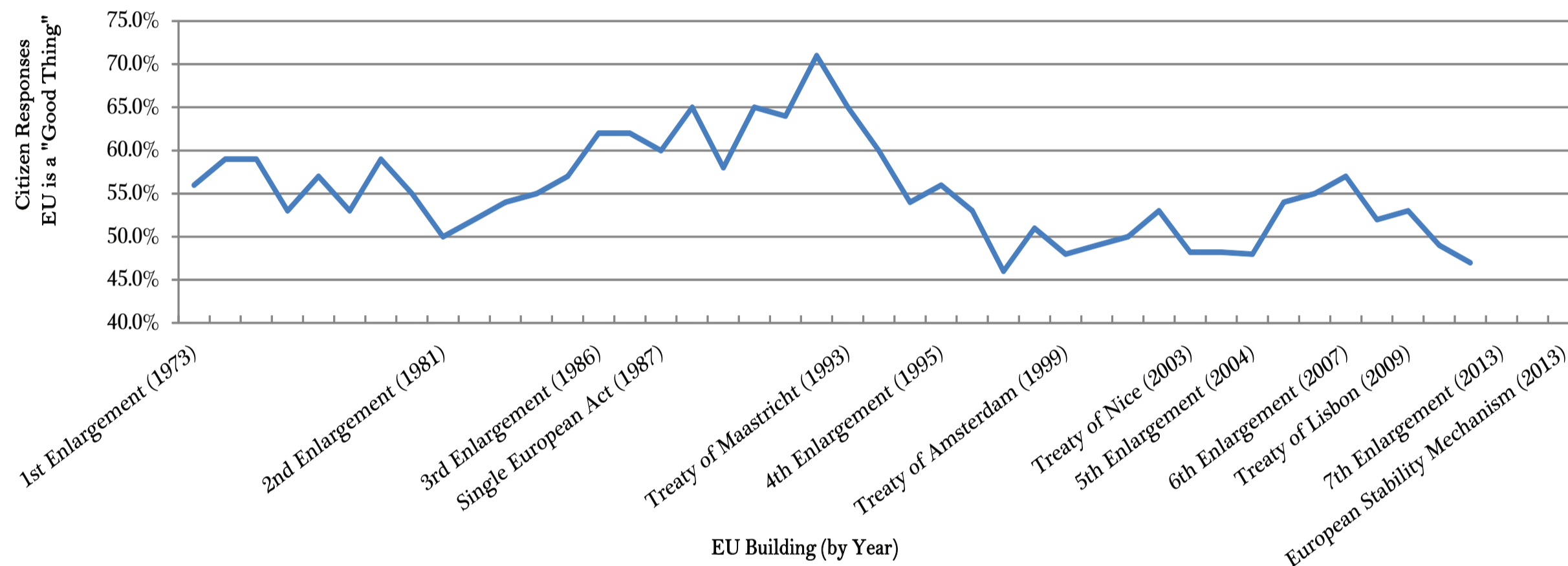
Previously widespread citizen acceptance of EU building gives way to growing discontent.

With a 7th enlargement and ratification of a new fiscal treaty (the European Stability Mechanism) expected by 2013, attention to opposition becomes crucial for future EU cohesion.

Losing Support?

Political elites pursue EU building based on the assumption that citizens support the EU in general.

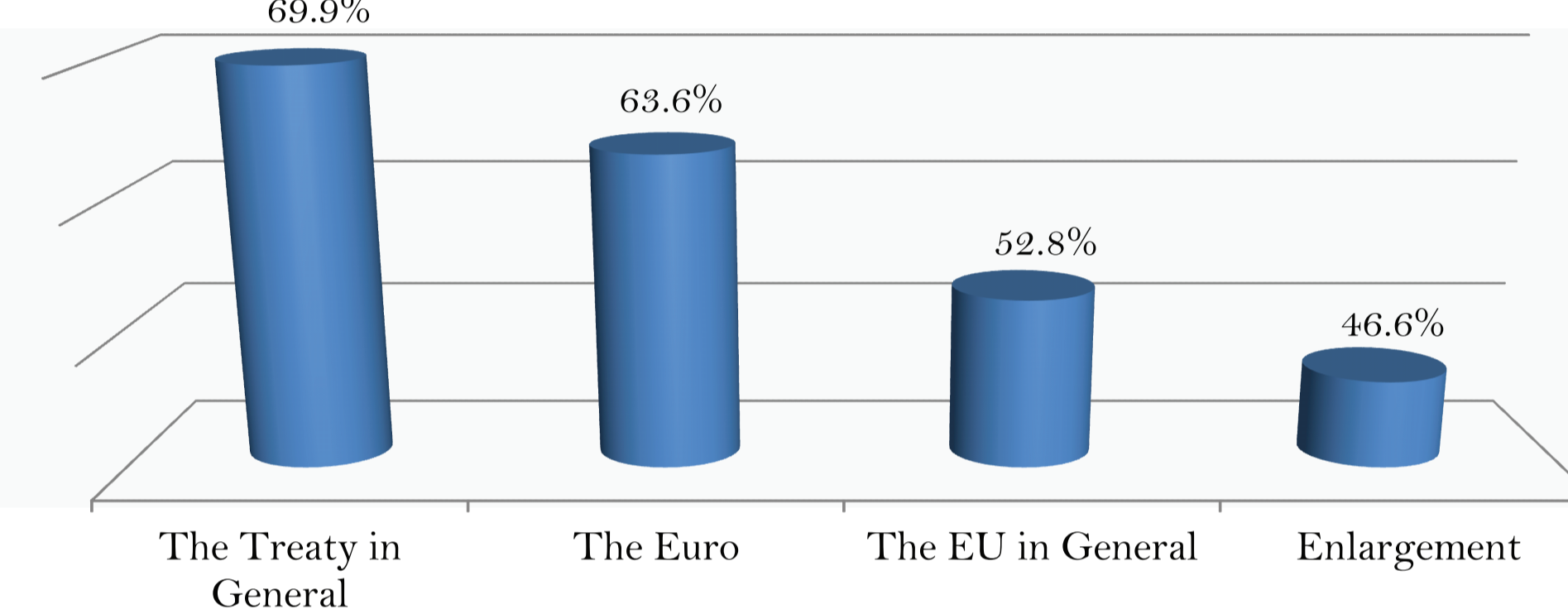
Citizen Support for the EU in General
1973-2011



Source: European Commission (Eurobarometer)
Generally speaking, do you think that (your country's) membership of the European Community (Common Market) is a good thing?

Discontent with What?

Citizen Support for the EU
During Treaty of Lisbon Ratification
2007-2009



Source: Eurobarometers:
66.1 N=26,647; 67.2 N=26,717; 69.2 N=26,661; 71.3 N=26,830

Opposed to New Members

Of all EU building questions, citizens are most opposed to enlargement.

Citizens are Discontent

General support has declined considerably since the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992.

Furthermore, when given a chance to vote on these treaties directly, citizens express their growing discontent.

Treaty of Maastricht (1993)

Rejected in Denmark 1st round
(50.7%)

Treaty of Nice (2003)

Rejected in Ireland 1st round
(53.9%)

Constitutional Treaty (abandoned)

Rejected in France (54.9%)
Rejected in the Netherlands (61.5%)

Treaty of Lisbon (2009)

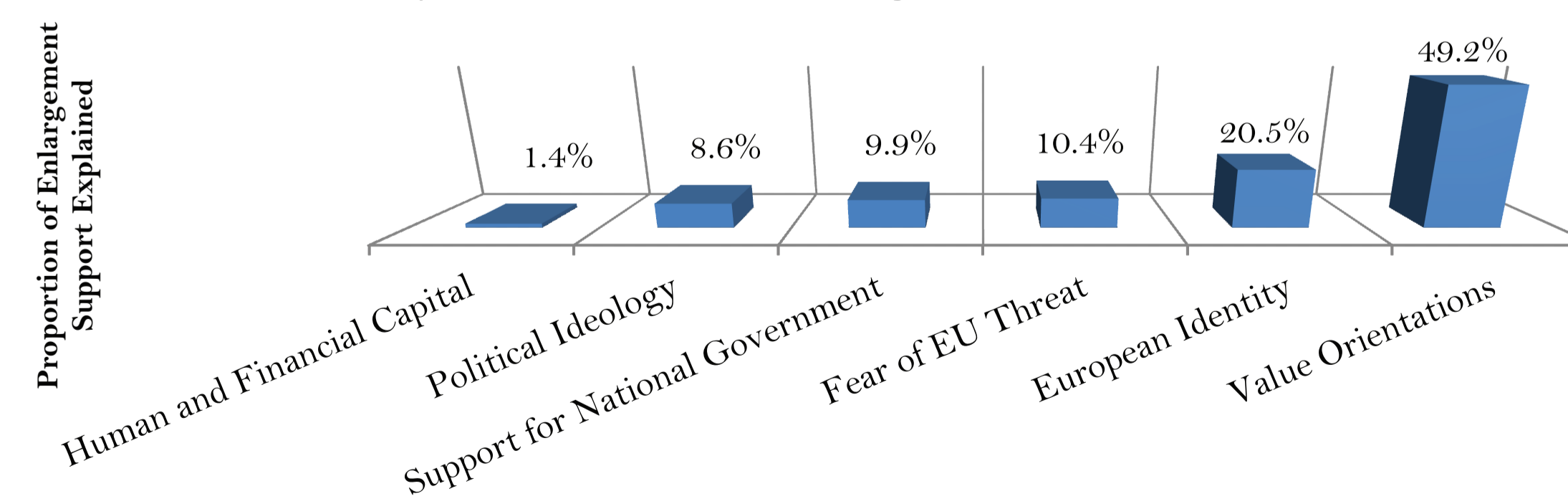
Rejected in Ireland 1st round
(53.2%)

Why are they Discontent?

Previous research suggests...

- EU threatens national culture (Ruiz-Jiménez & Torreblanca 2008)
- Low human or financial capital (Gabel 1998, McLaren 2002)
- Lack of support for national governments (Gabel 1998)
- Left Political Ideology (Gabel 1998)
- No European Identity (Wessels 2007)
- Value Orientations?

Hierarchy of Factors Driving Citizen Preferences



Source: European Values Study 2008
N = 11,169 Adj. R²:0.211

Preferences driven by Values and Identity

European Identity AND Values (especially trust in institutions and tolerance of others) explain the largest amount of variation in citizen preferences.