This chapter introduces the European law of patents and related rights with a discussion of the nature of patents as limited-term monopoly rights granted in respect of new, inventive, and industrially applicable inventions and the routes to obtaining patent protection in Europe. It then considers the existing European patent system established by the European Patent Convention 1973/2000, including its basis in state-based conceptions of IP territoriality, and the challenges presented to that system by globalization and developing technology. And finally, it discusses the long-standing pursuit of a unitary patent and unified patent court for Europe, including the reasons for each, and the features of the proposed Unitary Patent Package of 2012/2013.

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