

The UEFA Euro 2008 Final was the final match of Euro 2008, the thirteenth edition of the European Football Championship, UEFA's competition for national football teams. The match was played at Ernst Happel Stadion, Vienna, Austria, on 29 June 2008, and was contested by Germany and Spain. The sixteen team tournament consisted of a group stage, from which eight teams qualified for the knockout phase. En route to the final, Germany finished second in Group B, with a defeat to Croatia and wins over Poland and Austria, after which they defeated Portugal and Turkey in the knockouts. Spain finished top of Group D with three wins, against Russia, Sweden and Greece, before defeating Italy on penalties in the quarter final and a second victory over Russia in the semi final. The final took place in front of 51,428 supporters and was refereed by Roberto Rosetti from Italy. The Guardian's Scott Murray commented that Spain had 'started very poorly' while Germany had several early attacks. However, it was Spain who took the lead in the 33rd minute through Fernando Torres, who latched onto a through ball from Xavi, beat Philipp Lahm on the edge of the penalty area, and then clipped the ball over the advancing goalkeeper Jens Lehmann into the left hand corner of the German goal. Andrés Iniesta and Dani Güiza both had chances to double Spain's lead, while Michael Ballack's attempted equaliser went narrowly wide. The game finished with no further goals and Spain won 1–0 to secure their second European Championship. Torres was named the man of the match. Luis Aragonés, Spain's manager, revealed that he was 'full of emotion' after the victory; his German counterpart Joachim Löw expressed satisfaction with his team's performances and optimism for the future. Spain's victory marked the start of a period of dominance for the team that saw them winning the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, and then retaining their European title at Euro 2012. Germany went on to reach the semi finals of the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012, before eventually being successful with a win at the 2014 FIFA World Cup.