

NewsPortal User Manual

Version: 1.0

1. Introduction

Product Name: NewsPortal

Version: 1.0

Purpose:

NewsPortal is a website that provides news articles for public reading. The application allows users to access and read news content easily and efficiently. In addition to browsing articles, users can also add comments under each article to share their thoughts and engage in discussions.

Target Users:

- General public interested in reading news.
- Administrators responsible for managing content.

Key Features:

- **Read News Articles:** Anyone can access and read published articles.
- **User Registration (Sign Up):** Users can register for an account. Currently, registration does not provide additional benefits but may be extended in the future.
- **Add Comments:** Users can post comments under news articles to share their opinions and participate in discussions.
- **Admin Page:** Administrators can add, edit, and delete news articles.

Manual Structure:

This manual is organized into the following sections:

1. **General Information** – System requirements, supported browsers, and any known limitations.
2. **Getting Started** – Instructions for accessing the website, registering, and logging in.
3. **Interface and Navigation** – Overview of main pages, menus, and navigation elements.
4. **Core Functions / Tasks** – Step-by-step instructions for reading articles and managing content (for administrators).
5. **Error Messages and Troubleshooting** – Common issues, alerts, and guidance for resolving problems.
6. **Security and Privacy** – Guidelines for password policies, personal data handling, and secure usage.
7. **Support and Resources** – Contact information, helpful documentation, and ways to report issues or provide feedback.
8. **Appendices (Optional)** – Includes glossary of terms, additional configuration notes.

2. General Information

System Requirements

Server Requirements:

- Web server: Apache or Nginx (any server supporting PHP).
- PHP version: 7.4 or higher recommended.
- Required PHP extensions:
 - PDO ([php_pdo](#))
 - PDO MySQL ([php_pdo_mysql](#))
 - mbstring ([php_mbstring](#))
- UTF-8 support enabled in PHP.

Database Requirements:

- Database type: MySQL (or MariaDB).
- Database name: [newsportal](#).
- User credentials for local development:
 - Host: [localhost](#)
 - User: [root](#)
 - Password: (empty string)
- Note: For production, use a secure password and proper access permissions.

Client Requirements:

- Supported browsers: Latest versions of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, Safari.
- Minimum screen resolution: 1024×768.
- JavaScript must be enabled in the browser.

Optional / Recommended:

- Operating System: Windows, macOS, or Linux.
- Internet connection required if accessing the website remotely.
- For local testing/development: XAMPP, WAMP, or MAMP to run Apache + PHP + MySQL.

Supported Languages

- **English** (currently the only supported language).

Limitations / Known Constraints

- Registration currently provides **no additional benefits** to users.
- Admin functions (add/edit/delete articles) are **restricted to administrators only**.
- News articles support **images** up to 64kb (stored as BLOB in the database).
- Limited support for older browsers; best viewed in modern browsers.

Licensing / Registration / Access Permissions

- **License:** Free to use, not private or proprietary.
- **Registration:** Users can register (sign up), but no additional features are unlocked at this time.
- **Access Permissions:**
 - Admin page accessible **only to authorized administrators**.
 - Regular users cannot modify content.

3. Getting Started

3.1 For Users

Accessing the Website:

- Open your web browser and go to:
 - <http://localhost:3000>
 - or <http://localhost:3000/index.php>

Browsing News Articles:

- On the homepage, you can see a list of news articles.
- Click on any article to read its full content.
- Articles include images.
- You can add comments under news articles to share your thoughts.

Registering / Logging In:

- To register click the **Register** link in the navigation panel.
 - Currently, registration does not provide additional features but allows you to create a user account.
 - To log in, visit the admin login page at:
 - <http://localhost:3000/admin/>
 - or <http://localhost:3000/admin/index.php>
 - Only accounts with admin privileges can log in and access the admin panel. Regular users cannot manage news content.
-

3.2 For Developers / Administrators

Setting Up the Project Locally:

1. Install Required Software:

- Web server: Apache or Nginx
- PHP 7.4 or higher with extensions: PDO, PDO MySQL, mbstring
- MySQL or MariaDB
- Optionally, use XAMPP, WAMP, or MAMP for an all-in-one setup

2. Database Setup:

- Open your database management tool (phpMyAdmin, MySQL Workbench, or command line).
- Import the provided SQL file: sql/newsportal_sample_data.sql.
 - This file includes all necessary tables (`news`, `users`, etc.) and several sample records for testing.
- Ensure the database is named `newsportal` or update `inc/database.php` with the correct database name and credentials.

3. Project Files:

- Place the project files in your web server's root folder (e.g., `htdocs` for XAMPP).
- Ensure the folder structure is maintained:

```

NewsPortal/
    └── admin/
        ├── controllers/          # Admin module
        ├── models/               # Admin-specific data models
        ├── routes/               # Admin route definitions
        ├── views/                # Admin templates/pages
        ├── js/                   # Admin-side JavaScript files
        ├── public/
        │   ├── css/              # Admin CSS files
        │   ├── fonts/             # Fonts used on admin pages
        │   └── js/                # Additional admin JS
        └── .htaccess
            └── index.php         # Entry point for Admin Panel

    └── controller/           # Main site controllers
    └── model/                # Main site models
    └── view/                 # Main site templates/pages
    └── route/                # Front-end route definitions
    └── inc/                  # Includes Database.php

    └── public/               # Public assets for the main site
        └── css/                # Global styles (non-admin)

    └── sql/                  # Database schema and sample data

    └── .htaccess
    └── index.php             # Main entry point of the application
    └── style.css              # Core front-end stylesheet
    └── user_manual.md         # Project user manual

```

4. Configure Database Connection:

- Open `inc/database.php`.
- Update `$host`, `$user`, `$password`, and `$baseName` if your local setup differs from defaults:

```

$this->host = 'localhost';
$this->user = 'root';
$this->password = '';
$this->baseName = 'newsportal';

```

5. Access the Website:

- Open your browser and navigate to `http://localhost:3000` or `http://localhost:3000/index.php` to see the NewsPortal homepage.

Admin Access:

- Administrators log in using their credentials on the **dedicated admin login page**.
 - The admin login page is **not accessible** through the standard **Register/Login** button on the public site.
 - Admin users must manually navigate to the admin login URL: <http://localhost:3000/admin/> or [admin/index.php](#).
 - After a successful login, administrators gain access to the admin panel where they can manage news articles (add, edit, delete).
 - Only accounts with admin privileges can access the admin interface.
 - Use the admin account included in the sample database to log in and manage content.
-

Note:

- The included sample database makes it easy to test the website immediately without manually creating tables or records.
- For production environments, use secure passwords and proper access control.

4. Interface and Navigation

4.1 Main Page

Note: The layout of the website remains consistent across all pages/views; only the main content area changes as you navigate through different sections.

Overview:

When you visit the site, the **Main Page** displays the **3 latest news articles** by default.

Navigation Panel:

At the top of the page, there is a navigation panel with the following links:

- **Category** – displays a vertical list of news categories, starting with **ALL**.
 - Clicking a category shows articles only from that category.
 - Selecting **ALL** displays all articles, but **without images**.
- **Info** – currently unavailable; clicking it returns an **Error 404** page.
- **Main Page** – returns to the homepage showing the latest articles.
- **Register** – opens the registration form.

Article Overview:

- Each article shows a **red number in parentheses** (), indicating the number of comments.
- Below each article, there is a **Details** link that opens the article page, showing:
 - Full article description
 - Comments section
 - Comment field with a **Send** button

Registration Form:

- Accessible via the **Register** link in the navigation panel.
- The registration page contains the following fields:

1. Name
 2. Email
 3. Password
 4. Confirm Password
- Buttons/Links:
 - **Register** – submits the registration form
 - **Web Site** – returns to the Main Page

4.2 Admin Page

Admin Login Page:

- Accessible at:
 - <http://localhost:3000/admin/>
 - or <http://localhost:3000/admin/index.php>
- Contains the following elements:
 - **Email** field
 - **Password** field
 - **Enter** button to submit login credentials
 - **Web Site** link below the form that redirects to the Main Page

Admin Panel (after successful login):

- **Navigation Panel (top links):**
 - **WEB SITE** – returns to the Main Page
 - **Admin Main** – opens the admin panel home
 - **Categories** – currently unavailable; returns **Error 404**
 - **News Articles List** – displays all articles in the system
- **Top-right corner:**
 - Displays the logged-in user's name (e.g., User or Administrator)
 - **Exit** link with exit door icon – logs out the user and sends to the **Admin Login Page**

News Articles List:

- **Add News** button – opens the form to create a new article
- Below the button, a table lists all articles with the following columns:
 - **ID** – article identifier
 - **Header News** – contains title, category, and author
 - **EDIT** and **DELETE** links with icons `class="glyphicon glyphicon-edit"` and `class="glyphicon glyphicon-remove"` accordingly.

Add News Article Form:

- Fields:
 - **News Article Title**
 - **News Article Text**
 - **Category** (select form)

- **Picture** (file upload)
- Buttons:
 - **Save** – with a crest icon (`class="glyphicon glyphicon-plus"`)
 - **Back to List** – with back icon (`<i class="glyphicon glyphicon-backward"></i>`)

Edit News Article Form:

- Same as Add News form, with these differences:
 - Displays the **old picture** between category and picture upload fields
 - **Edit** button instead of Save

Delete News Article Form:

- Similar layout, with the following differences:
 - **Old Picture** displayed
 - **Delete** button instead of Save
 - No picture upload field

5. Core Functions / Tasks

5.1 Browsing News Articles (User)

Steps:

1. Open the Main Page (<http://localhost:3000> or <http://localhost:3000/index.php>).
2. Scroll through the list of the 3 latest news articles.
3. Click the **Details** link under any article to read the full content.

Expected Result:

- The article page opens, displaying the full text and associated images.
- Comments (if any) are displayed below the article.

Example:

- You see a news article titled “Tech Giant Releases New Smartphone” and click **Details** to read more about it.

Screenshot:

Categories Info Main Page Register

TOP 3 NEWS



Breakthrough in Quantum Computing Achieved

[Details](#)



Tech Giant Releases New Smartphone

(4)

[Details](#)



Olympic Committee Announces 2028 Host Cities

(3)

[Details](#)

Figure 5.1: Main Page showing the latest news articles and navigation panel.

5.2 Viewing Articles by Category (User)

Steps:

1. Click the **Category** link in the navigation panel.
2. Select a category from the vertical list (starting with **ALL**).

Expected Result:

- Only articles belonging to the selected category are displayed.
- Selecting **ALL** shows all articles without images.

Example:

- You want to read only Technology news. Click the **Technology** category to filter articles accordingly.

Screenshot:

The screenshot shows a user interface for a news website. At the top, there is a red navigation bar with four items: 'Categories' (highlighted in yellow), 'Info', 'Main Page', and 'Register'. On the left, a vertical sidebar has four categories: 'ALL', 'Politics', 'Sport', and 'Technology' (also highlighted in yellow). The main content area displays two news articles under the heading 'News (category)'. The first article is titled 'Breakthrough in Quantum Computing Achieved' with a lightbulb icon. Below it is a link 'Details'. The second article is titled 'Tech Giant Releases New Smartphone' with a similar lightbulb icon. It includes a red '(4)' indicating comments and a 'Details' link. The background of the main content area features a subtle grid pattern.

Figure 5.2: Category list expanded with Technology selected.

5.3 Adding a Comment (User)

Steps:

1. Open the article page by clicking **Details**.
2. Scroll to the comment field at the bottom of the article.
3. Type your comment.
4. Click **Send**.

Expected Result:

- Your comment appears immediately under the article.

Example:

- You read an article about a local event and write: "Looking forward to attending!"

Screenshot:

Categories	Info	Main Page	Register
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Olympic Committee Announces 2028 Host Cities

(3)



Cities across the country will host events for the upcoming Summer Games.

Comment	Date
Looking forward to the 2028 Olympics already!	2025-11-24 10:40:28
Hope these locations bring a great atmosphere to the games.	2025-11-24 10:40:20
Exciting news—can't wait to see how the host cities prepare!	2025-11-24 10:40:11

Your comment:

Figure 5.3: Comment field under the article with the Send button.

Note:

- All users can add comments.

5.4 Registering an Account (User)

Steps:

1. Click the **Register** link in the navigation panel.
2. Fill in the registration form: Name, Email, Password, Confirm Password.
3. Click **Register**.

Expected Result:

- Your user account is created successfully.
- You can now log in via the admin login page.

Screenshot:

The screenshot shows a registration form titled "Registration". It contains four input fields: "Name", "Email Address", "Password", and "Confirm Password", each with a corresponding text input box. Below these fields is a blue "Register" button. At the bottom left of the form, there is a link labeled "Web Site".

Figure 5.4: Registration form with all required fields and Register button.

Note:

- Registration currently does not provide additional features for regular users.

5.5 Admin Login

Steps:

1. Navigate to the admin login page: <http://localhost:3000/admin/> or <http://localhost:3000/admin/index.php>.
2. Enter your admin email and password.
3. Click **Enter**.

Expected Result:

- You are redirected to the Admin Panel.

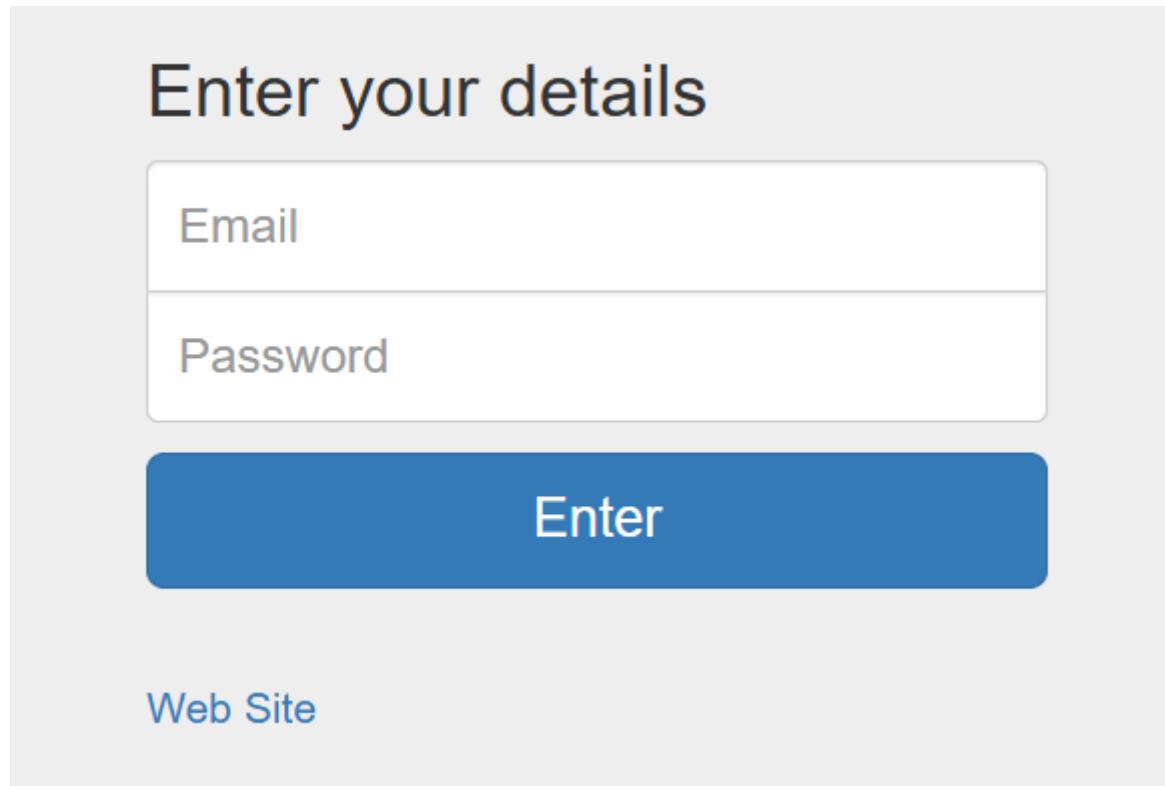
Screenshot:

Figure 5.5: Admin login page with email and password fields and Enter button.

Note:

- Only accounts with admin privileges can access the admin panel features.
-

5.6 Adding a News Article (Admin)

Steps:

1. From the Admin Panel, click **News Articles List**.
2. Click **Add News**.
3. Fill in the form:
 - News Article Title
 - News Article Text
 - Category (select from dropdown)
 - Picture (choose file)
4. Click **Save** to add the article.
5. Or click **Back to List** to cancel.

Expected Result:

- The new article appears in the news articles list.

Screenshot:

The screenshot shows a web-based administration interface for managing news articles. At the top, a navigation bar displays 'WEB SITE » Admin Panel » Categories » News Articles List'. On the right side of the bar are links for 'Administrator' and 'Exit'. Below the navigation, the title 'Add News Article' is centered. The form consists of several input fields arranged in rows: 'News Article title' (empty text input), 'News Article text' (empty text area), 'Category' (dropdown menu set to 'Politics'), and 'Picture' (button labeled 'Faili valimine' with a note 'Faile pole valitud'). At the bottom left are two buttons: a blue 'Save' button with a plus sign and a green 'Back to List' button with a back arrow.

Figure 5.6: Add News Article form with fields for title, text, category, and picture.

5.7 Editing a News Article (Admin)

Steps:

1. From the Admin Panel, click **News Articles List**.
2. Find the article you want to edit and click **EDIT**.
3. Update the fields as needed:
 - News Article Title
 - News Article Text
 - Category
 - Optionally replace the picture
4. Click **Edit** to save changes.
5. Or click **Back to List** to cancel.

Expected Result:

- The article is updated in the news articles list.

Screenshot:

WEB SITE » Admin Panel » Categories » News Articles List Administrator Exit ↗

Edit News Article

News Article title	Breakthrough in Quantum Computing Achieved
News Article text	Researchers report a new method to improve processing speed and stability.
Category	Technology
Old Picture	
Picture	<input type="button" value="Faili valimine"/> <input type="button" value="Faile pole valitud"/>
<input type="button" value="+ Edit"/> <input type="button" value="Back to List"/>	

Figure 5.7: Edit News Article form showing old picture display and Edit button.

5.8 Deleting a News Article (Admin)

Steps:

1. From the Admin Panel, click **News Articles List**.
2. Find the article you want to delete and click **DELETE**.
3. Confirm deletion when prompted.

Expected Result:

- The article is removed from the news articles list.

Screenshot:

WEB SITE » Admin Panel » Categories » News Articles List Administrator Exit ↗

Delete News Article

News Article title	Breakthrough in Quantum Computing Achieved
News Article text	Researchers report a new method to improve processing speed and stability.
Category	Technology
Old Picture	
<input type="button" value="+ Delete"/> <input type="button" value="Back to List"/>	

Figure 5.8: Delete News Article form showing old picture and Delete button.

Warning:

- Deletion is permanent. Once an article is deleted, it cannot be recovered.

6. Error Messages and Troubleshooting

This section lists common errors and alerts that users and administrators may encounter, along with their causes and solutions.

6.1 User Errors

Message / Alert	Cause	Solution / Notes
Cannot access the website	Local server is not running or project folder not placed correctly.	Start the local server (XAMPP/WAMP/Laravel) and ensure the project folder is in htdocs or WWW .
Form validation errors	Missing required fields in the registration form or passwords don't match.	Fill all fields correctly; ensure password and confirm password match.
Incorrect username or password	Login credentials are invalid.	Double-check the email and password. As administrator use the admin account from the sample database.
Already logged-in user redirected	A session for the user already exists.	You are automatically redirected to the Admin Panel. Log out first if you want to switch accounts.
404 Page Not Found	The user navigated to a page that does not exist or is unavailable (e.g., Info page).	Use navigation panel links to go to a valid page.

6.2 Admin Errors / Alerts

Message / Alert	Cause	Solution / Notes
Article is edited	The article was successfully updated in the database.	Click News List to return to the list of articles.
Error editing article!	Database issue or missing required fields.	Ensure all required fields are filled, then try again. Contact the administrator if the problem persists.

Message / Alert	Cause	Solution / Notes
Article deleted	The article was successfully removed.	Verify the article is no longer in the News List.
Error deleting article!	Database issue or invalid article ID.	Retry the deletion or contact the administrator.
Add News success	New article added successfully.	Check the News List to see the new article.
Add News Article failure	Database problem or missing required fields.	Fill all required fields and try again. Check server/database configuration if the problem persists.
404 Page Not Found (Admin)	Admin tried to access a page that is not implemented yet (e.g., Categories or Info).	Use available navigation links or wait until the feature is implemented.

6.3 General Troubleshooting Tips

- Refresh the page if content does not load correctly.
- Clear the browser cache if changes are not appearing.
- Verify that **images and scripts** exist in the correct **public/** folders.
- Ensure the database connection is working if articles fail to load.
- Use the navigation panel to avoid unavailable routes.
- Make sure your account has **admin privileges** for admin tasks.

7. Security and Privacy

This section explains password policies, how personal data is handled, and recommendations for secure usage of the NewsPortal application.

7.1 Password Policies and Account Security

- Passwords, names and emails are required for all registered users and administrators.
- Passwords are **stored securely in hashed form** in the database.
- Users should choose **strong passwords**: at least 8 characters, combining letters, numbers, and symbols.
- Avoid sharing your password with anyone.
- Administrators should always **log out** after completing tasks using the **Exit** link in the admin panel.
- Avoid using the same password on multiple websites.

7.2 Handling Personal and Sensitive Data

- The application stores user data provided during registration:
 - `name`
 - `email` (must be **unique** in the database)
 - `password` (hashed in the database)
 - Comments posted under news articles may contain personal opinions. Users should **avoid sharing sensitive information**.
 - Passwords are hashed and cannot be viewed in plain text.
 - Access to user data in the database is restricted to administrators.
-

7.3 Recommendations for Secure Usage and Backup

- Regularly **back up the database**, especially when adding real content or users.
 - Ensure project files and the local server environment are **kept secure**.
 - Regular users can open the admin page, but only authorized administrators can/should access the admin panel features.
 - Avoid exposing the localhost server to the public unless proper security measures are in place.
 - Keep libraries (e.g., Bootstrap, Font Awesome) up-to-date to include security patches.
-

7.4 Compliance and Regulatory Notes

- NewsPortal is a **sample project**; no real user data is collected in production.
 - For real-world deployment, comply with **local data protection regulations** (e.g., GDPR in the EU).
 - Inform users about how their personal data is collected, stored, and used.
-

Tip: Even though this is a sample project, following these guidelines ensures that the application remains secure and user data is protected if adapted for real-world use.

8. Support and Resources

This section provides guidance on how users and administrators can get support or access additional resources.

8.1 Contact Information

- For questions or issues related to NewsPortal, contact the project author:
 - **Email:** daniil.peretjaka@ivkhk.ee

Note: As this is a sample project, real-time support is not available.

8.2 Documentation and Tutorials

- This user manual contains all the information needed to navigate and use the application.
- Additional resources:
 - [PHP Official Documentation](#)
 - [Bootstrap Documentation](#)

- [Font Awesome Icons](#)
-

8.3 Reporting Issues and Feedback

- Users and administrators can report bugs or provide feedback via email to the project author.
- Include details such as:
 - Steps to reproduce the issue
 - Screenshots of any errors or unexpected behavior
 - Browser and system information (if relevant)

9. Appendices (Optional)

The appendices provide additional reference material for administrators, developers, or advanced users. This section is optional but may be useful for maintenance or future extensions.

9.1 Glossary of Terms

- **Admin Panel** – Section for administrators to manage news articles.
- **Article** – A news item published on the website, with title, text, category, image, and comments.
- **Category** – Label to group articles by topic (e.g., Sports, Technology, Politics).
- **Comment** – User-submitted feedback under an article.
- **Navigation Panel** – Menu at the top of the page for navigating different sections.
- **Register / Sign Up** – Process to create a new user account.
- **Session** – Temporary storage for tracking logged-in users.
- **Error 404** – Page not found when a user navigates to a non-existent page.
- **Public Folder (`public/`)** – Directory containing CSS, JavaScript, fonts, and other assets.
- **Hashing** – Process of converting a password into a secure, unreadable format.

9.2 Additional Configuration or Scripting Instructions

- **Database Configuration:** Adjust credentials in `Database.php` for your environment.
- **File Permissions:** Ensure `public/` folder files are readable by the web server.
- **Custom Scripts:** Additional JavaScript or PHP scripts can be added to the project.
- **Backup Recommendations:** Regularly back up the database and project files to prevent data loss.

Note: This section is optional and intended as a reference for developers or administrators extending the project.