The EMI Liferay Portal: A User's Perspective

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This manual serves as an introduction to the Liferay-based EMI Web site for all project members and external visitors who want to know how they can interact with the various sections and services or contribute to the content.

Registered and Unregistered Users

If you just need to retrieve information about the project and what it offers, you don't need to register for an account.
If you want to interact with the various services the portal has to offer you need to get an account.
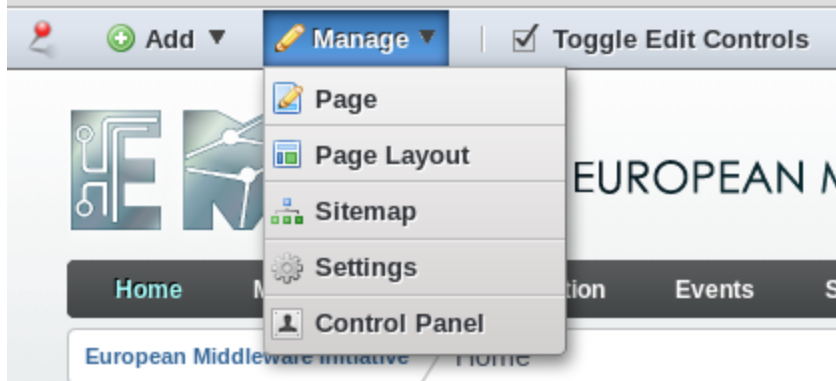To do that, click on `Log in` on the upper right corner of each page.
Liferay users belong to communities. The EMI web site's main community is the *European Middleware Initiative* community. All registered users which work for or are associated with EMI should belong to this community.
If you fall into this category, you can ask the administrator to add your name to this community.
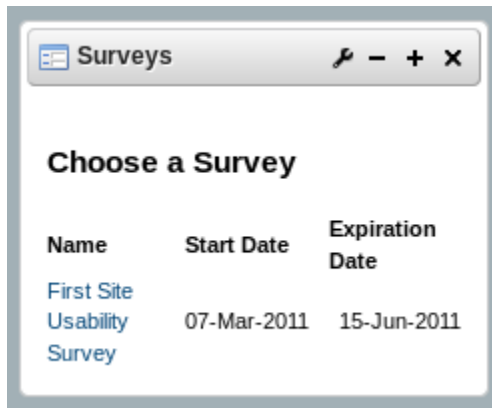
Edit Controls Toolbar

Liferay's controls are available as an *Edit Controls Toolbar* on top of each page. What controls are available depends on the role of the logged in user.

Elements of a Page

Liferay is a portlet container. From the user's point of view a *portlet* is an application running in its own window inside a page. An application can just display content or interact with a user.
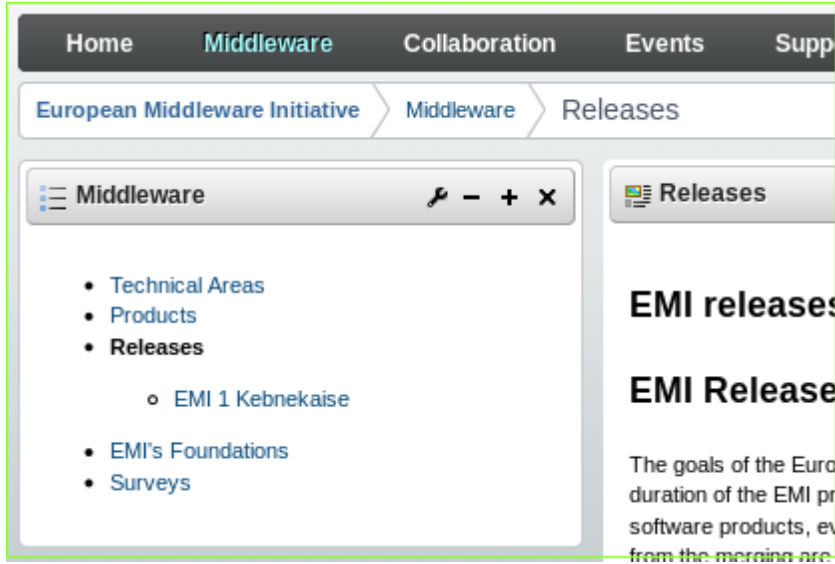
This is the home screen of the EMI Survey portlet which dispays a list of active surveys a user can take.

Each page is a collection of portlets positioned as the underlying layout template commands. Portlets can be moved around the page by an authorized user to best fit her needs.

Example The EMI home page has a custom 3-column template (1st column: 30%, 2nd column: 40%, 3rd column: 30%). Portlets are piled up in each column but can be moved to other columns above or below the other portlets in that column.

On the top of the page you can find the main menu. Only two levels are shown here.
To navigate the other levels you will use the *Navigation portlet* which is included in the pages reachable from the main menu.

Example Here we selected the *Releases* page which is a 2nd level page in the page tree. Once the page displays you will see the Navigation portlet on the top left corner of the page.
The title of the portlet is the 1st level page. The levels below the current one (*Releases*) are automatically expanded by the portlet (*EMI 1 Kebnekiase*).

Note *You cannot select the parent 1st level page once you are on a 2nd level page. I.e. You cannot navigate to Middleware once you are on the Releases page. This is probably a bug in Liferay. Just click on a different 1st level item and then back to the one you wanted to visit.*
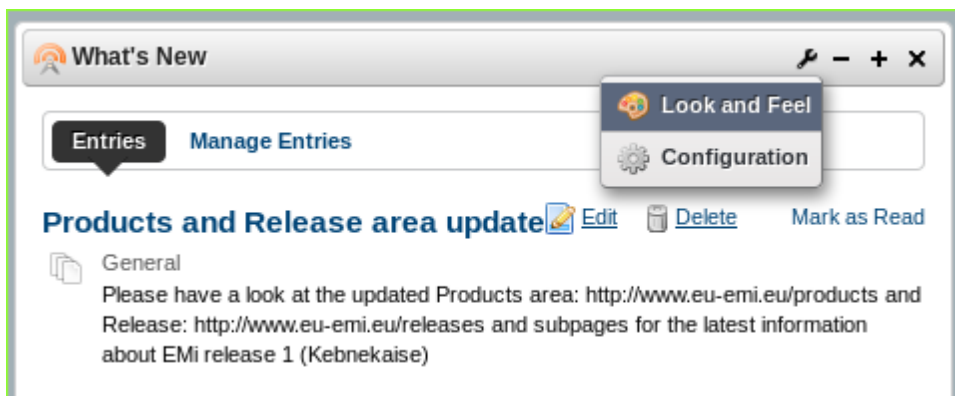
Elements of a Portlet

Each portlet displays a common set of elements. On the top left corner an icon and the title.
Auth User On the top right corner an authorized user can find the set up menu which has at least 2 entries: *Look and feel* and *Configuration*.
A regular user will not see the set up menu or this menu will only have the refresh button.
Auth User After the set up menu there are the known commands to resize a window.

Auth User Most portlets can be also configured and managed from the control Panel which is
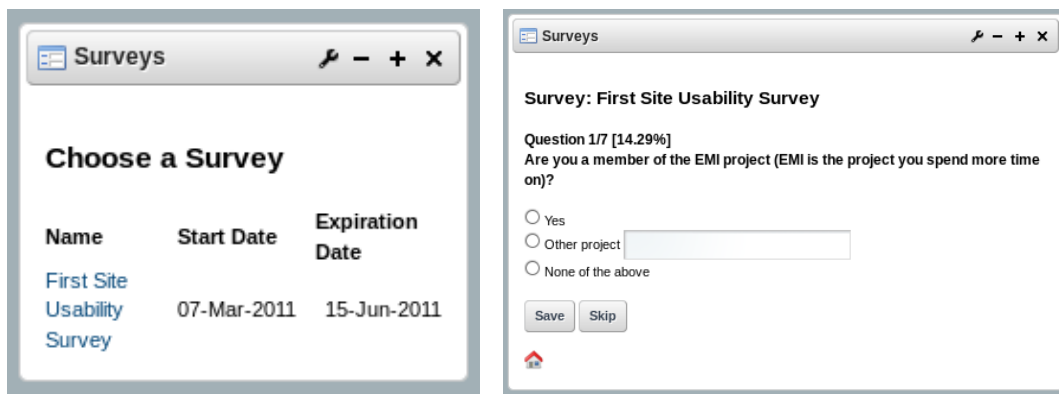
only accessible to the administrators.

Roles

[TODO]

Surveys

EMI will periodically publish surveys on different aspect of the project work. Active surveys can be found in the EMI Survey Portlet somewhere at the bottom of the home page.
If you spot a survey which is meaningful to you, you're invited to participate. Select the survey and you'll be presented with the first question.

User Forums

A decision was taken to activate the EMI user forums in spite of the fact that there are established forums for the original middlewares where all the experts and customers are.
The reason is always the same: if we want to establish the EMI brand we need a full environment where the brand is alive.
The problem at this point is to create a bridge between the existing and the new ones to attract some of the more specific EMI traffic.
There will soon be a procedure for people who want to help. [TODO]

Note *You need to be logged in to do anything besides reading posts on the user forums.*

Contributing Text

First you need to pick up a page. If the page doesn't exist, you should ask an administrator to create it for you (send an email to the emi-web@eu-emi.eu list) or you can create it yourself if you're authorized.
Auth User To create a page you can select Add → Page from the Edit Controls Toolbar or Manage → Page.
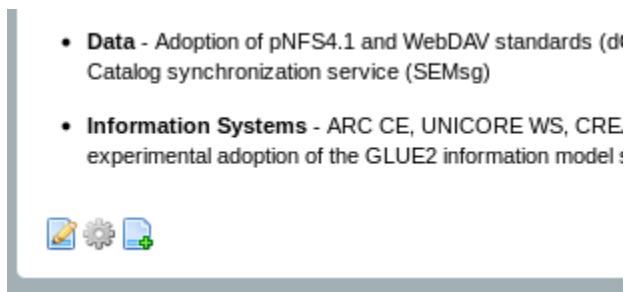
Note *Liferay allows the creation of page templates. A page template allows the creation of multiple pages with the same layout and page elements. This feature will be be probably used in the future as soon as a relevant number of new pages will need to be created.*

The layout of most pages of the EMI web site is 2-column 30%-70%. If you need to change that, select a new layout from Manage → Page Layout.
If you need to add text content to a page the portlet for you is called *Web Content Display*. It can be found in Add → Web Content Display.
The logic behind the Add Menu is that the most used portlets have direct entries while all the others can be found in Add → More. There you can search for a portlet or select it from a category.
To add or edit existing content choose the relative icons at the bottom of the portlet. (See image below.)

A WYSIWYG editor will be displayed to help you and hide the HTML.
Once you're done remember to add a title for this piece of content (Name field on top) and publish it or use the other save options at the bottom.

Note *The title is compulsory. You won't be able to save a piece of content without choosing a title for it.*